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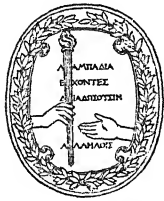
THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

By JOHN FORSTER

ILLUSTRATED

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. III.



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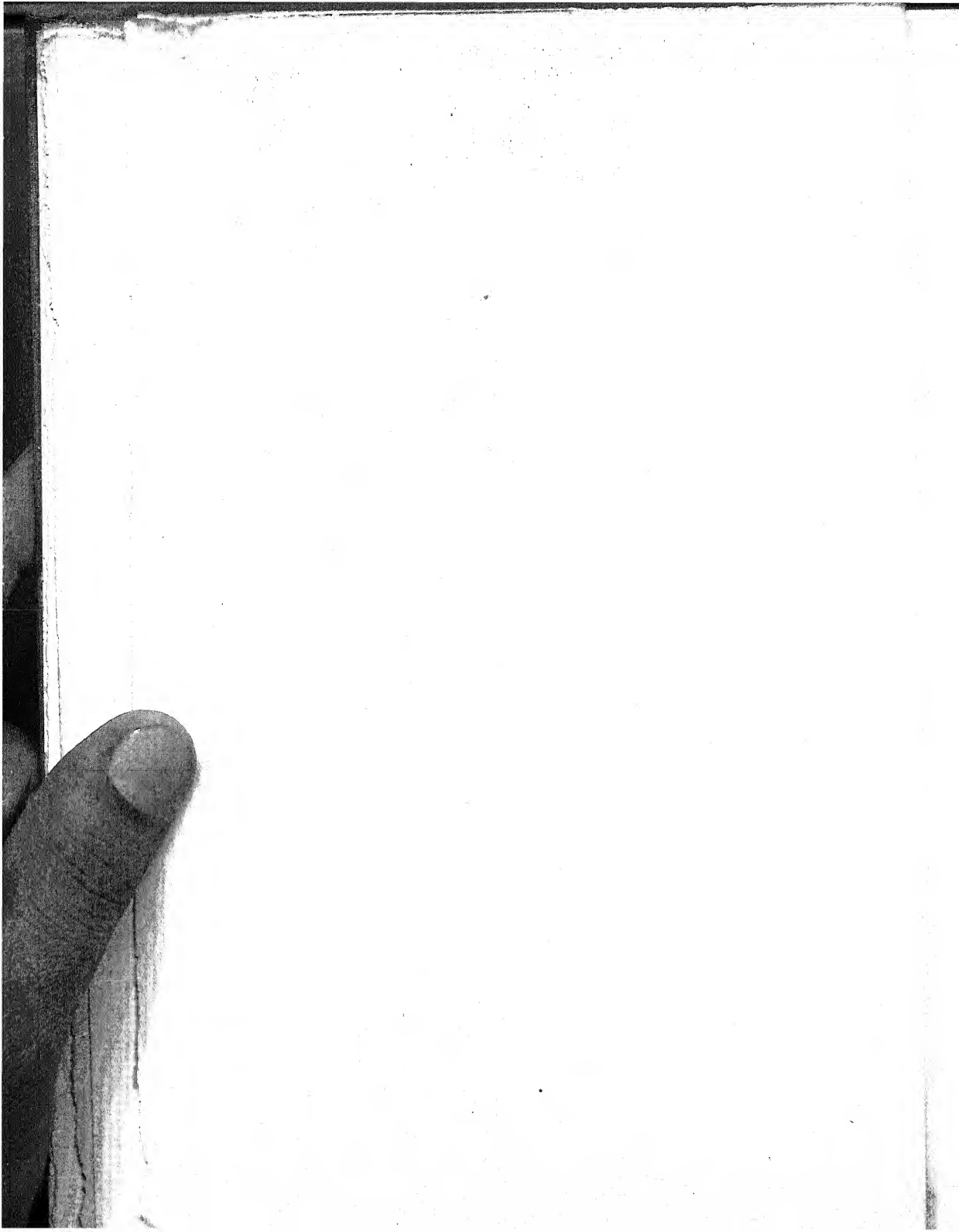
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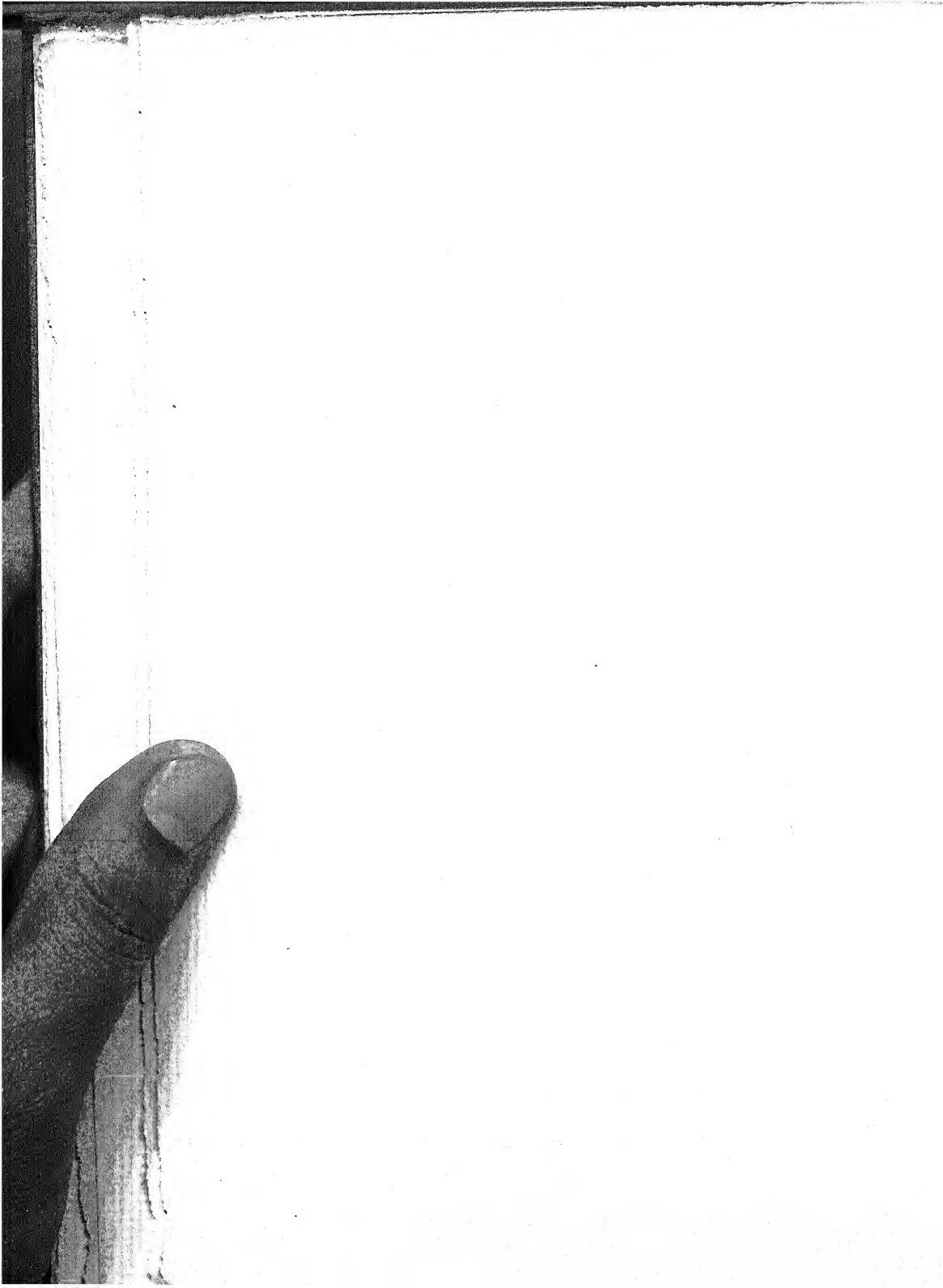
GOLDSMITH, THE FRIEND OF JOHNSON, BURKE, AND REYNOLDS: DRAMATIST, NOVELIST, AND POET

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BOOK THE THIRD

AUTHORSHIP BY CHOICE

1759 TO 1767

(Continued)

CHAPTER XIV

OLD DRUDGERY WITH A NEW HOPE

1766

"SATURDAY will be published," said the *Public Advertiser* of the 20th of May, 1766, "in two volumes, in twelves, price 6s. bound, or 5s. sewed, the second edition of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. A Tale. Supposed to be written by himself. *Sperate miseri, cavete felices*. Printed for F. Newbery, at the Crown in Pater-noster Row."—And on that very Saturday a bill which Oliver Goldsmith had drawn upon Mr. John Newbery, for fifteen guineas, was returned dishonored. But the old time did not come back with the old necessities. If solid rewards were not now to wait on even the happiest of Goldsmith's achievements, he was never again to lose courage and hope, or to show signs of yielding in the struggle. He had always his accustomed resource, and went uncomplaining to the desk.

Payne the bookseller gave him in this month ten guineas for compiling a duodecimo volume of "*Poems for Young Ladies*. In three parts: Devotional, Moral, and Entertaining." It was a respectable selection of pieces, chiefly from Parnell, Pope, Thomson, Addison, and Collins; with additions of less importance from less eminent hands, and some occasional verses which he supposed to be his friend Robert Nugent's,¹ but which were really written by Lord

¹ The origin of the mistake is obvious. Nugent had written an "Epistle to —," beginning

"Clarinda, dearly lov'd, attend
The counsels of a faithful friend";

and this had become confounded in Goldsmith's recollection with Lyttelton's "Advice to a Lady," beginning,

"The counsels of a friend, Belinda, hear."

Lyttelton. It has been assumed to have been in this book "for young ladies" that two objectionable pieces by Prior were inserted; but the statement, though sanctioned by Percy, is incorrect. It was in a more extensive compilation of *Beauties of English Poetry Selected*, published in the following year, and for the gathering together of which Griffin the bookseller gave him fifty pounds, that he made that questionable choice of the "Ladle" and "Hans Carvel," which for once interdicted from general reading a book with his name upon its title-page. This was unlucky; for the selection in other respects, making allowance for a limited acquaintance with the earlier English poets, was a reasonably good one; and in this, as well as in its preface and brief notices of the pieces quoted, though without any claim to originality or critical depth, was not undeserving of what he claimed generally for books of the kind as entitling them to fair reward.¹ He used to point to them as illustrating, better than any other kind of compilations, "the art of profession" in authorship. "Judgment," he said, "is to be paid for in such selections; and a man may be twenty years of his life cultivating his judgment." But he has also, with its help, to be mindful of changes in the public taste, to which he may himself have contributed. Nothing is more frequent than these, and few things so

¹ His old friend Griffiths, nevertheless, laid hold of it to assail him in the *Monthly Review*, which had the good taste thus to speak of the now avowed author of the *Citizen of the World*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and the *Traveller*: "Though Mr. Goldsmith hath written some little pieces that have been read and approved of, yet, from his preface, notes, and introductions to these poems, one would almost be inclined to think he had never written before."—*Monthly Review*, xxxvi. 490, June, 1767. The reviewer's wrath was greatly excited by Goldsmith's having said of Shenstone's *Schoolmistress* that it was "one of those happinesses in which a poet excels himself"—but is it not true? Which of the *Pastorals* has survived with it in the love and admiration of the readers of poetry?

² *European Magazine*, xxiv. 94. Cooke tells us that his own account of this selection was "that he did nothing but mark the particular passages with a red-lead pencil, and for this he got £200." He only got a fourth of that sum, as we see; the rest, perhaps, was a little braggadocio for admirers at the Wednesday Club.

sudden. Staid wives will shrink with abhorrence in their fortieth autumn from what they read with delight in their twentieth summer; and it was now even less than twenty years since that faultless "family expositor," Dr. Doddridge (as we learn from the letters of the pious divine), thought it no sin to read the *Wife of Bath's Tale* to young Nancy Moore, and take his share in the laugh it raised.¹ Dr. Johnson himself had not forgotten those habits and ways of his youth; and amazed Boswell, some ten years later, by asserting that *Prior* was a lady's book, and that no lady was ashamed to have it standing in her library.

The Doctor could hardly have taken part in the present luckless selection, however, for through all the summer and autumn months of the year he had withdrawn from his old haunts and friends, and taken refuge with the Thrales. The latter, happening to visit him in Johnson's Court one day at the close of spring, had found him on his knees in such a passion of morbid melancholy, beseech-

¹ *Memoirs and Correspondence of Doddridge*, iv. 182. Walter Scott was acquainted with an old lady of family who assured him that, in her younger days, Mrs. Behn's novels were as currently upon the toilet as the works of Miss Edgeworth at present; and described with some humor her own surprise when, the book falling into her hands after a long interval of years and when its contents were quite forgotten, she found it altogether impossible to endure, at the age of fourscore, what at fifteen she, like all the fashionable world of the time, had perused without an idea of impropriety. Scott has also recorded, on the authority of his friend John Kemble, that there existed a distinct oral tradition of a conversation having passed between a lady of high rank seated in a box in the theatre and Mr. Congreve, the celebrated dramatist, who was placed at some distance, which was so little fit for modern ears that a rake of common outward decency would hardly employ such language in a brothel. Two years before the present date Horace Walpole printed, at Strawberry Hill, a small volume of *Poems* by Lady Temple, of which some are too grossly indelicate to be now reproduced. See *Grenville Correspondence*, ii. 257. And as I have frequent occasion to exhibit Walpole in the course of this volume as a critic of Goldsmith, let me here give a glimpse of him as the critic of Lady Temple: "To do real justice to these poems, they should be compared with the first thoughts and sketches of *other great poets*. Mr. Addison, with infinite labor, accomplished a few fine poems; but what does your ladyship think were his rough draughts?" *Risum teneatis?*

ing God to continue to him the use of his understanding, and proclaiming such sins of which he supposed himself guilty, that poor sober, solid Thrale was fain to "lift up one hand to shut his mouth," and the worthy pair bore him off, by a sort of kindly force, to their hospitable home. With cheerfulness, health returned after some few months; he passed a portion of the summer with them at Brighton;¹ and from that time, says Murphy, Johnson became almost resident in the family. "He went occasionally to the club in Gerrard Street, but his headquarters were fixed at Streatham." Goldsmith had rightly foreseen how ill things were going with him when not even a new play could induce him to attend the theatre.

In his own attendance at the theatre he was just now more zealous than ever, and had doubtless "assisted" at some recent memorable nights there. When all the world went to see Rousseau, for example, including the King and Queen; when their Majesties, though Garrick exhibited all his powers in Lusignan and Lord Chalkstone, looked more at the philosopher than at the player; and when poor Mrs. Garrick, who had exalted him on a seat in her box (rewarded for her pains by his laughing at Lusignan and crying at Lord Chalkstone, not understanding a word of either), held him back by the skirts of his coat all night, in continual terror that "the recluse philosopher" would tumble over the front of the box into the pit, from his eager anxiety to show himself,²—Goldsmith could hardly have stayed away. Nor is he likely to have been absent when

¹ It was here, or as Mrs. Thrale calls it, "at Brighthelmstone," that on the man who dipped people in the sea "seeing Mr. Johnson swim in the year 1766, 'Why, sir,' says the dipper, 'you must have been a stout-hearted gentleman forty years ago.'"—*Anecdotes*, 113. Another compliment of this date he always remembered with pride. I think, says Mrs. Thrale, no praise ever went so close to his heart. It was when "Mr. Hamilton called out one day, upon Brighthelmstone Downs, 'Why, Johnson rides as well, for aught I see, as the most illiterate fellow in England.'"—*Ib.* 206-207.

² Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 205. And see a very amusing passage in Hume's *Private Correspondence*, 143-144.

Rousseau

the Drury Lane players (with many of whom, especially Mr. and Mrs. Yates, he had now formed acquaintance) made the great rally for their rival fund; and, in defiance of his outlawry, Wilkes unexpectedly showed himself in the theatre, more bent on seeing Garrick's *Kitely* than keeping faith with the ministry, to whom, through Burke, he had the day before promised to go back to Paris more secretly and quickly than he had come to London.¹ Least of all could Goldsmith have been absent when the last new comedy was played, of which all the town was talking still; and which seems to have this year turned his thoughts for the first time to the theatre, with serious intention to try his own fortune there.

The "Clandestine Marriage," the great success of the year, and for the strength and variety of its character deservedly so, had been the joint work of Colman and Garrick, whose respective shares in its authorship have been much disputed,² but now seem clear and ascertainable enough. The idea of the comedy originated with Colman as he was looking at the first plate in Hogarth's immortal series of "*Marriage à la Mode*"; but he admits that it was Garrick who, on being taken into counsel, suggested that important alteration of Hogarth's "proud lord" into an amiable old ruin of a fop, descending to pin his noble, decayed skirts to the frock of a tradesman's daughter, but still aspiring to the hopes and submitting to the toils of conquest, which gave to the stage its favorite Lord Ogleby. These leading ideas determined on, rough hints for the construction and conduct of the plot, of which Colman's was made public by his son three-and-thirty years ago, and Garrick's did not see the light till the other day,³ were exchanged between the

¹ *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 272-273.

² See *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 210-216; and a note to the latter page. See also Murphy's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 27-30; Peake's *Memoirs of the Colman Family*, i. 159-173; and Colman's *Posthumous Letters*, 327-347.

³ They were published from Garrick's MS. in the *Observer* newspaper; and, as they have not been otherwise preserved, I subjoin some noteworthy extracts. The original draft of characters was thus sketched: "Men. GARRICK—*An old Beau, vain, &c.*; YATES—*His Brother*; O'BRIEN

friends; and from these it is manifest that, in addition to what Colman in his letters somewhat scantily admits to have been Garrick's contribution—namely, the first suggestion of Lord Ogleby, his opening levee scene, and the fifth act which he closes with such handsome gallantry—the prac-

—*Their Nephew*; KING—*An old flattering Servant of Garrick's*. Women. CLIVE—*Aunt of the Two Sisters*; BRIDE—*Elder Sister*; POPE—*The youngest, a fibbing, mischief-making girl*; BRADSHAW—*An old, flattering toad-eater of the Aunt's*." The younger and elder sister afterwards changed characters, and Miss Bride gave way to Mrs. Palmer in Fanny. Subjoined are the principal points of Garrick's outline.

"ACT I. SCENE I. *Enter Bride and O'Brien.*

"Enter Bride and O'Brien (who are secretly married), complaining how unhappy she is, and how disagreeably situated she is on account of their concealing the marriage. In this scene must be artfully set forth the situation and business of the *dramatis personæ*. The audience must learn that Mrs. Clive, the aunt, has two nieces, co-heiresses, and one of them is to be married to O'Brien, the son of Garrick and nephew to Yates. They are met at the aunt's, I suppose, to see which of the young ladies will be most agreeable to the young man. (*Query*—whether there may not be a design to have a double match, the father with the aunt?) The youngest sister, Pope, and the aunt, fall in love with him, and all three pay their court to Garrick on account of his son, which he interprets as love to himself. Yates, Garrick's brother, who lives in the country—a rough, laughing, hearty fellow—is come to approve of one of the young ladies for his nephew, and to see this grand family business settled. Bride declares her distress at seeing that her sister and aunt are in love with her husband, and that his father takes their different attentions to him for passion. She seems to think that nothing but an avowal of their marriage will set all to rights; but O'Brien gives reasons for still concealing it, and says that their future welfare depends upon keeping the secret. N. B.—In this scene the characters of the two brothers, Garrick and Yates, should be told, with a hint of Garrick's flattering servant, King.

"SCENE V. *Garrick and King.*

"Garrick appears at his toilet, preparing for the conquest of the day. His servant and he, by their conversation, are positive that all the females are in love with Garrick, which he readily believes, and acts accordingly.

"ACT II. SCENE V. *Bride and O'Brien.*

"She is very uneasy, and cannot bear this going on, her heart is too susceptible of tenderness and jealousy; and this must be a short, matrimonial conversation, in which a delicate heart and mind must be shown; and she resolves to open her breast to Garrick, and try to bring him over to

tised actor had mapped out more clearly than Colman, though he may not have written all, the other principal scenes in which his chosen character was concerned.¹ What he submitted for the interview where the antiquated fop supposes Fanny to have fallen in love with him will not only exhibit this, but hereafter help us to understand some disagreements between himself and Goldsmith. "Bride," he remarks, putting the actor always in place of the character, resolves to open her heart to Garrick, and try to bring him over to forgive them. "O'Brien consents, and leaves her upon seeing Garrick come smiling along. Enter Garrick, he smiling, and taking every word from the girl as love to himself. She hesitates, falters; which confirms him more and more, till at last she is obliged to go off abruptly, and dare not discover what she intended, which is now demonstration to Garrick, who is left alone, and may show himself in all the glory of his character in a soliloquy of vanity. He resolves to have the girl, and break the hearts of the rest of

forgive them. O'Brien consents, and leaves her upon seeing Garrick come smiling along." (The continuation of this scene is given in my text.)

"ACT III. SCENE III. *Clive and Garrick.*

"This will be a fine scene worked up, with their mutual delicacies, not to open their minds too abruptly nor to shock each other. The upshot of it is to resolve to give consent, and determine that Clive shall have O'Brien and Garrick Bride; and thus the scheme shall be settled, and indulge their own inclinations at the expense of all parties, when they go off, resolving to convene all the persons concerned directly.

"SCENE IV. *Pope.*

"Pope comes from behind some flowering shrubs, where she has been listening, and has overheard these precious persons laying their schemes and opening their minds to each other, and seeing Yates come along she is resolved to make more mischief."

¹ Colman's claim is, indeed, cautiously worded. . "In the conduct as well as dialogue of the fourth act, I think your favorite Lord Ogleby has some obligations to me," etc.—*Garrick Correspondence*, i. 210. From Naples, on the Christmas-eve of 1763, Garrick had written to Colman: "What is become of your Terence? I have not yet written a word of the fourth or fifth acts of the 'Clandestine Marriage'; but I am thinking much about it."—*Peake's Memoirs*, i. 93.

the female world." Powell had to replace O'Brien, however,¹ and King was substituted for Garrick, before the play was acted; and out of the latter circumstance arose a coolness between the friends which will reappear in this narrative. Colman thought Garrick's surrender of Lord Ogleby a capricious forfeiture of promise; but though an exception to his previous withdrawal from all new parts was at first intended in this case, he exercised a sound discretion in changing that purpose. The new character was, in truth little more than an enrichment of one of his own farces, assisted by a farce of his friend Townley's; and he could himself but have made Lord Ogleby an improved Lord Chalkstone. It was better left to an entirely new representative, and King justified his choice. Colman's sense of injury was, nevertheless, kept carefully alive by good-natured friends; and when Garrick, some time after the play's production, and while the town were still crowding to see it, wrote in triumph to his coadjutor of the difficulties of the rival house ("The ministry all to pieces. Pitt, they say, and a new arrangement. Beard and Co. going positively to sell their patent for sixty thousand pounds. 'Tis true; but, mum. We have not yet discovered the purchasers. When I know, you shall know: there will be the devil to do")² he little imagined what notions he was then infusing into Colman's busy, discontented brain.

The unexampled success of their comedy had seemed in truth as thoroughly to have reconciled them as it had unsettled poor Goldsmith's thoughts, and driven them, with a new hope, in the direction of the stage. This was not unnatural. The reputation of his later writings, bringing him into occasional better company, had tempted him to greater expenses while it failed to supply the means of keeping

¹ A great loss; for Powell's fine gentlemen, as Goldsmith had soon too much reason to know, were very poor, and the great Lewis told Mr. Boaden (*Garrick Correspondence*, i. 170) that "O'Brien was the only actor who seemed perfectly *genteel* upon the stage."

² See this and other letters of Garrick in Colman's *Posthumous Letters*, 271-310.

pace with them.¹ He was readier than ever to work hard, but the other habits rendered needfuller than ever more than all the labor they enabled him to give. There was a hint of this, as I have already said, in Hogarth's portrait of him three years ago;² but not until now is the satiric touch perceived to be fully applicable. Here therefore, and now, may poor Oliver most fitly again be seen, as the great painter saw him, desperately at work, bent resolutely over his paper, but with a hand that moves across it perhaps not more freely because of the ruffles and rings that adorn it.

Yet never was there so much need that nothing should impede his pen. His accounts with Newbery were growing more and more involved; an unpaid note for fifty pounds, which he had given in settlement three years ago, began to make threatening reappearance; there had been payment of the dishonored bill lately referred to, but his last draft upon the not unfriendly but cautious bookseller, though for only eleven guineas, had been dishonored; and ordinary modes of extrication seemed more difficult and distant than ever. What wonder, then, that there should have flashed upon him a vision of hope from the theatre? Anxiety and pain he knew there would also be; but he was not indisposed to risk them. They could never wholly obscure the brighter side. No longer might the play-house be called the sole seat of wit; nor could it any more be said, as in Steele's days, to bear as important relation to the manners as the bank to the credit of the nation; but besides the tempting profits of an "author's nights," which, with any reasonable success, could hardly average less than from three to four hundred pounds, there was nothing to make the town half so fond of a man, even yet, as a successful play. It had been the dream, too, of his own earliest ambition; and though his juvenile tragedy had gone the way of dreams, he had now a surer and not untried ground to

¹ Speaking of Reynolds's note-books in this year Mr. Taylor tells us (*Life*, i. 255): "There are engagements for dinners with Goldsmith, to provide which some of Newbery's scanty payments for the *Vicar*" (there was only one) "may have melted."

² See vol. ii. 94.

build upon, of humor, character, and wit. He resolved to attempt a comedy.

What, meanwhile, his leisure amusements were, since Johnson's withdrawal to the Thrales had limited their intercourse at Gerrard Street, may be worth illustrating by occasional little anecdotes of the time, though rather loosely told. He had joined a card-club, at the "Devil" tavern, near Temple Bar, where very moderate whist was played, and where the members seem to have occupied the intervals of their favorite game with practical jokes upon himself. Here he had happened to give a guinea instead of a shilling, one night, to the driver of a coach (after dining with Tom Davies); and on the following night a fictitious coachman presented himself to restore a counterfeit guinea. It was a trick to prove that not even the honesty of a hackney coachman would be too startling a trial for Goldsmith's credulity; and, as anticipated, the gilded coin was taken with an overflow of simple thanks and subsequent more solid acknowledgment of the supposed marvellous honesty. Other incidents tell the same tale of credulous, unsuspecting, odd simplicity. Dr. Sleigh, of Cork, had asked him to be kind to a young Irish law student heretofore mentioned, who had taken chambers near his own, who was known afterwards as a writer for the newspapers, Foote's and Macklin's biographer, and, from the title of the most successful poem he published, *Conversation Cooke*; ¹ and the latter, invited to apply to him in case of need, was told with earnest regrets one day, in answer to a trifling application, that he was really not at that moment in possession of a guinea. The youth turned away in less distress than Goldsmith; and, returning to his own chambers after midnight, found a difficulty in getting in. Goldsmith had meanwhile himself borrowed the money, followed with it too late, and thrust it,

¹ See note, vol. i. 54. In the fourth edition of his poem he introduced some sketches of the Gerrard Street club, among them Goldsmith; and in the dedication to the same poem will be found a capital sketch of another friend of his, the author of the best detached essay ever written on Shakespeare, Maurice Morgann.

wrapped up in paper, half underneath the door. Cooke hurried next day to thank him, and tell him what a mercy it was somebody else had not laid hold of it. "In truth, my dear fellow," said Goldsmith, "I did not think of that."¹ As little did he trouble himself to think when a French adventurer went to him towards the close of the year with proposals for a History of England in French, which was not only to be completed in fifteen volumes at the cost of seven guineas and a half, and to be paid for in advance, but to have the effect of bringing into more friendly relations the men of letters of both countries. Goldsmith, though he had been fain but a few days before this, for the humble payment of two guineas, to write Newbery a "Preface to Wiseman's Grammar,"² had no mean notion of the dignity

¹ The little details of this anecdote are so characteristic that I subjoin them in the words of the original narrator: "My old friend Mr. Cooke, the barrister," says Mr. John Taylor, in his *Records of my Life* (Ed. 1832, i. 107-110), "who brought letters to Goldsmith from Cork, in the year 1766, used to speak of his benevolence and simplicity in the highest terms. . . . Mr. Cooke had engaged to meet a party at Marylebone Gardens, and . . . applied to his friend Goldsmith for the loan of a guinea. Poor Goldsmith was in the same *Parnassian* predicament, but undertook to borrow the sum of a friend, and to bring it to Cooke before he departed for the gardens. Cooke waited in expectation to the last moment . . . but no Goldsmith appeared. He, therefore, trusted to fortune, and sallied forth. Meeting some hospitable Irish countrymen at the place, he partook of a good supper, and did not return to his chambers till five in the morning. Finding some difficulty in opening his door, he stooped to remove the impediment, and found it was the guinea that Goldsmith had borrowed for him, wrapped in paper, which he had attempted to thrust under the door, not observing the hole in the letter-box, obvious to everybody else. Cooke thanked him in the course of the day, but observed that he ought not to have exposed the sum to such danger in so critical a state of their finances, as the laundress, coming early in the morning, or any casual stranger, might have seized the precious deposit. . . . In answer he said, 'In truth, my dear fellow, I did not think of that.' The fact is, he probably thought of nothing but serving a friend."

² In the same memorandum of the Newbery MSS. in which this is entered the *Traveller* reappears; and though at first one is fain to hope that it might express a new payment for a new edition, closer examination shows that this is not so. "Mr. Newbery, Dr.—*Brookes's* 4 vols. correcting, £21; *Natural Philosophy*, £63; *Traveller*, £21; Translation of *Philosophy*, £20; Preface to Wiseman's *Grammar*, £2 2s. [Total], £127 2s. June 7,

of literature in regard to such proposals as this French impostor's, and now indulged it at a thoughtless cost. Straightway he gave his name, impoverished himself by giving his last available guinea, and, in the "Colonel Chevalier de Champigny's" advertisements, jostling the names of crowned heads and ambassadors, figured as the "Author of the *Traveller*."¹

Pleasanter are the anecdotes which tell of his love for the young and anxiety to have them for his readers. It was matter of pride to one with as gentle a spirit and as wise a heart, the late Charles Lamb, to remember that the old woman who taught him his letters had in her own school-girl days been patted on the head by Goldsmith. Visiting where she stayed one day, he found her reading his selection of *Poems for Young Ladies*, praised her fondness for poetry, and sent her his own poem to encourage it. The son of Hoole, Ariosto's translator, remembered a similar incident in his father's house. Other amusing traits might be added, strongly resembling such as already have been told. Booksellers would get him to recommend books, misguiding him as to the grounds of recommendation;² and

1766. OLIVER GOLDSMITH." It is in Goldsmith's handwriting, on a full sheet; and is but a duplicate of Newbery's similar memorandum, vol. ii. 165-166. There is, moreover, among the same papers, yet a third memorandum in which the same payment appears; and this, which is in Newbery's writing, is simply a repetition of the second, with additions of the £3 3s. for "Preface to the History of the World" included in the first, of a pencil note of what he had paid for the copy of the *Essays* also in the first, and of a memorandum to the effect that "The last settlement was the 11th of October, 1766," where the date of the year is very obviously a slip of the pen for 1763. No trace exists in the papers of any formal settlement subsequent to the 11th of October, 1763, on which day a general winding-up of accounts as between Newbery and Goldsmith took place; when the latter, besides signing a general receipt, gave special receipts as to each particular transaction (probably required for the satisfaction of other partners in the literary work so paid for), all written by himself and dated on the same day, and finally handed over to Newbery a promissory note, also dated that day, for the balance. Supposing the memorandum made, as is likely, at the close of 1765 or the opening of 1766, the mistake of the latter year for 1763 was a natural one enough.

¹ *Percy Memoir*, 99, 100.

² As in the case of Blainville. See vol. ii. 169-170.

though everybody had been laughing at the exaggerated accounts of Patagonians nine feet high brought home by Commodore Byron's party, Goldsmith earnestly protested that he had talked with the carpenter of the commodore's ship (a "sensible, understanding man, and I believe extremely faithful"),¹ and by him had been assured, in the most solemn manner, of the truth of the relation. Nor was it altogether romance, though the honest carpenter made the most of what he had seen. Even the last survey of those coasts, though it does not establish the assertions of Magalhaens and Byron, leaves it certain that the Patagonians exceed the height of ordinary men, and that the believers in such a possibility were not nearly such fools as the majority too readily supposed.

¹ *Animated Nature*, ii. 261. Ed. 1774. The words do not appear in the later editions.

CHAPTER XV

THE GREAT WORLD AND ITS RULERS

1766

THE eleventh year of Goldsmith's London struggle was now coming to a close amid strange excitement and change, which I may stop briefly to recall. Its reaction on literature and its cultivators will be seen, as, from the point at which we left him last, we follow Burke's upward ascent in the teeth of every disadvantage opposed to him. What Garrick had reported of the ministry in the summer was in the main correct. Though it had not broken to pieces, the King had exploded it; and there was Pitt and a new "arrangement." The word was not ill chosen. Changes of ministry were now brought about without the conflict of principles or party, and by no better means than might be used for "arrangement" of the royal bedchamber. Lord Rockingham had hardly taken office when the Duke of Cumberland's death left him defenceless against palace intrigues; and their busy fomentors, the "King's friends" whom Burke has gibbeted in his *Thoughts on Discontents*, very speedily destroyed him. His Stamp Act repeal bill, his American Trading bill, his resolution against General Warrants, and his Seizure of Papers bill, were the signal for royal favor to every creeping placeman who opposed them; and on the failure of the latter bill Grafton threw up his office, saying Pitt alone could save them. Pitt's fame as well as peace would have profited had he consented to do that. But against his better self the King's appeals had enlisted his pride; and he had not strength, amid failing health, to conquer the impulse of vanity. He alone of all

men, he was told, could rally the people, reunite the nobles, and save the throne; he alone, the King wrote to him, could "destroy all party distinctions and restore that subordination to government which alone can preserve that inestimable blessing, liberty, from degenerating into licentiousness." A wise thing, if it could have been accomplished; but a thing that was never even seriously intended.¹ The system of which George the Third and Lord Bute were the inventors and Bubb Dodington the apostle, was no alliance of the throne with the people, but subordination of everything, including the great houses, to the throne. For party the King would have substituted prerogative; for faction, despotism; for occasional corruption of the House of Commons, its entire extinction as an independent house; and for the partial evils of a system which bound men firmly together for general public purposes, though it strengthened them sometimes for particular selfish ends, the universal treachery and falsehood of a band of reptile parasites, acknowledging no allegiance but at the palace and no service but the King's. No man better than Pitt should have known this; yet in an evil hour he consented to be Prime Minister, with the title of the Earl of Chatham.*

Rockingham retired, with hands as clean as when he

¹ "Lord Rockingham and Dowdeswell are caressed by the King at court beyond expression," wrote Lord Temple on the 4th May; and in June the fate of the ministry was determined.—*Rockingham Memoirs*, i. 346. "Lord Rockingham himself told me," says Nicholls, "that the King never showed him such distinguished marks of kindness as after he had secretly determined to get rid of him."—*Recollections and Reflections during the Reign of George III.* i. 22 (a book well worth reading for illustrations of this kind, though inspired by the most intense and unaccountable dislike of "the Burkes"). This was a habit observable in that prince to the last, and often remarked by ministers who trusted to it and were deceived.

"Oh!" exclaims Gray, "that foolishness of great men that sold his inestimable diamond for a paltry peerage and pension. The very night it happened was I swearing it was a damned lie, and never could be. But it was for want of reading Thomas à Kempis, who knew mankind so much better than I."—Gray to Warton. *Works*, iii. 264-266. But for the best that can be said on the matter, and for a general view of existing parties written with admirable feeling and eloquence, see Macaulay's second paper on Chatham, in the *Essays*, iii. 445-542.

entered office; without having bribed to get power or intrigued to keep it; without asking for honor, place, or pension, for any of his friends; and with that phalanx of friends unbroken. He was then, and for some years later the only minister since the King's accession with whom Bute had not secretly tampered, or whom the favorite had publicly opposed;¹ and the one great fault of his administration had sprung from a pedantry of honor. He thought that, in taxing America, the legislature had been impolitic and wrong; but he could not bring himself to think that the legislative power of the empire was not supreme over the colonies within its rule, and that it was not able to tax America as to commit any other as mad injustice. Surely, however, the very act to repeal the injustice acknowledged sufficiently the power to commit it; and to superadd a declaration of the power was to invite its future reassertion. It might be true; but it was galling, and not necessary. It was, in the same breath, an assertion of strength with a confession of weakness, and unwisely halted half-way between conciliation and a threat. Nor did anything so much as this give George Grenville his future strength in opposition, when, with his dogged yet solid and vigorous eloquence, he continued to maintain that there was no middle course between enforcing submission or acknowledging independence. Upon this question, therefore, it had been that the great Chief Justice Pratt, who enjoyed Pitt's chosen confidence, and whom Rockingham had on that ground singled out for elevation to the earldom of Camden, used the privilege so generously given resolutely to oppose the giver. The example was one, on the part of both minister and opponent, by which Pitt might of late have profited; but his noble nature had become clouded for a time. To many proffers from Lord Rockingham to serve with him, to accept him even as a leader, the only answer vouchsafed by Pitt had been a studied slight; and the only return now made by Chatham was an attempt to separate the

¹See Burke's "Short Account" in his *Works*, i. 207-209.

party from its chief. This was steadily resisted. Savile, Dowdeswell, Lord John Cavendish, the Duke of Richmond, the Duke of Portland, Fitzherbert, and Charles Yorke (Burke could only refuse future office, he had none to resign), persisted in resigning office; and the only important members of the late administration who remained were the two whom Cumberland had induced to join it, General Conway (with whom William Burke remained as under-secretary) and the Duke of Grafton.

With these, though strongly opposed in views as well as temper, were now associated two men of remarkable talents, personal adherents of Chatham; Lord Camden as Chancellor and Lord Shelburne as a Secretary of State: the latter a young but not untried statesman, and distinguished not merely for political ability, but also for such rare tastes and independent originality of character that men of science and letters, such men as even Goldsmith, had come to regard him as a friend. The next ingredient in the strange compound was Charles Townshend, perhaps the cleverest and certainly the most dangerous man in the whole kingdom. Admirably did Horace Walpole remark that his good-humor turned away hatred from him, but his levity intercepted love. He was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the lead of the House of Commons; and his opinions no man knew, save that they were simply the opinions of the House of Commons. He had with equal ability advocated every shade of opinion; as the majority had with equal impartiality voted the same. Burke called him the child of the house, and said he never thought, did, or spoke anything but with a view to it; that he adapted himself to its disposition every day, adjusted himself before it as at a looking-glass, saw of himself only what was reflected there, and was infinitely above having any opinion apart from it. Certainly no man, for his brief reign, was ever so popular in it, or in the extravagance of his inconsistencies so nearly approached to its own. The light of his ascending star is compared, by no partial witness, to the majesty of Pitt's descending glory; nor does it seem doubtful that his later influence

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in debate transcended even the great commoner's.¹ But a man is not remembered in history for his mere predominance in the House of Commons; and he who exactly suits that audience and "hits the House between wind and water" may be found to have lost a nobler hearing and missed much worthier aims. Little spoken of, indeed, as Charles Townshend now is, it seems necessary to call to mind, when any modern writer pauses at his once famous name, that as well in the copious abundance of his faults as the wonderful brilliancy of his parts he had far outstripped competition; and must have ranked, even beyond the circle of his contemporaries, for the most knowing man of their age but for his ignorance of "common truth, common sincerity, common honesty, common modesty, common steadiness, common courage, and common sense."² Wanting these qualities, and having every other in surprising abundance, he most thoroughly completed the charm of powerful trouble which Chatham was now preparing, and in which every shade of patriot and courtier, King's friend and republican, Tory and Whig, treacherous ally and open enemy, were at length most ingeniously united. Nobody knew anybody in this memorable cabinet, and all its members hated each other. Soon did even its author turn suddenly away from the monstrous prodigy he had created and leave it to work its mischief unrestrained.

Poor Conway first took the alarm, and got the Duke of Grafton to urge the necessity of having some one in the lower house on whom real reliance could be placed. There will be "a strong phalanx of able personages against us," he said; "and among those whom Mr. Conway wishes to see support him is Mr. Burke, the readiest man on all points,

¹ Curious incidental notices of Townshend will be found in the *Autobiography* of Jupiter Carlyle, who first met him as a fellow-student in Leyden. I may now also refer the reader to *Charles Townshend, Poet and Statesman*, a volume lately published by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald.

² Walpole's *George III.* iii. 102. A view of these affairs, somewhat differing from that which I have taken, but very masterly, has been interwoven by Lord John Russell with the *Memorials of Fox*, i. 111-122.

perhaps, in the whole house." Burke had been a member little more than six months when this was written; yet, even among the men who thus felt his usefulness, there was as little idea of recognizing his claim to an office of any importance as of offering to make him prime minister. His own wish had been, as soon as it became certain that the Rockinghams must resign, to obtain an appointment which happened then to be vacant, and to have held which, however quickly surrendered, would have increased his Parliamentary consideration; but he failed in the attempt, and was styled, by the vehement Bishop of Chester, nothing short of a "madman" to have made it. "Here is an Irishman," wrote Colonel Lee¹ in the following month to the Prince Royal of Poland, "sprung up in the House of Commons, who has astonished everybody by the power of his eloquence and his comprehensive knowledge in all our exterior and internal politics and commercial interests. He wants nothing but that sort of dignity annexed to rank and property in England to make him the most considerable man in the lower house." Wanting that, however, he wanted all, so far as office was concerned. Well might Walpole say that the narrowness of his fortune kept him down. The great families disowned him.² Not many

¹ Lee's commission of General was given him by Washington, whose service he entered with Walpole's godson Gates and other Englishmen in the first campaign for independence. For a memoir of him, see Sir Henry Bunbury's *Hanmer Correspondence*, 453-480.

² One exception let me make at once, and in a family at this time bitterly opposed to the line Burke had taken. Charles Fox was now but a lad of seventeen, who had scarcely quitted Oxford, yet we have evidence in his letters to Macartney that already he was in friendly intercourse with Burke; just as we ascertain, from his letters to the same correspondent, that while yet at college, and hardly sixteen, he had discovered that the *Traveller* was the only thing worth reading in the current literature of the day, and praised it accordingly. The true heart, from whatever confused environments, will be always found in one form or other pulsating to the true. "If there were any way of sending you," writes Charles Fox in February, 1765, to Macartney, then in Russia, "I would send you a new poem called the *Traveller*, which appears to me to have a great deal of merit. I do not know anything else that I could advise you to read if you

weeks after this letter was written, the amiable but irresolute Conway himself (from whose service, greatly to his honor, William Burke soon afterwards retired and was replaced by David Hume), irritated by his predominance, jeered at him in public debate as "an Irish adventurer"; though, within a month, seventy-seven Lancaster merchants had publicly thanked him for his strenuous efforts to relieve the burdens on trade and commerce; and Grafton had even gone so far as to urge upon Chatham that he looked upon it he was a most material man to gain, even at the price of some office a trifle higher than that of a lordship at the Board of Trade.¹ The attempt was made, and failed; and it was well that it did so. It was well that when America again was taxed, Burke should have been free to enter his protest against it; that when the public liberties were again invaded, Burke should have had the power to defend them; that when the elective franchise was trampled under foot, and five several free elections were counted void, Burke, amid even some defection of his friends, should have had the freedom, as he had the courage, to proclaim the constitution violated and allegiance endangered; that when Townshend began to make public ridicule of his colleagues, and raise the laugh of the House of Commons against the Graftons and Conways, Burke should have met him with a wit as keen as his own, and a laugh more likely to endure; and that throughout those counter-intrigues into which the palace intrigues now drove the great families, which would have shamed the morality of the highway, and which engaged the three "gangs" of the Bedfords, the Temple-Grenvilles, and the Court, in a profligate and desperate conflict of venality, rapacity and faleshood, Burke

were here."—Lord John Russell's *Memorials of Fox*, i. 20; and for allusion to Burke, i. 26, etc.

¹ "If I mistake not, he was offered the Board of Trade during the last year, and declined it, aiming at a higher Board, or some equivalent. I cannot help saying that I look upon it that he is a most material man to gain, and one on whom the thoroughest dependence may be given where an obligation is owed."—Duke of Grafton to the Earl of Chatham, October 17, 1766. *Chatham Correspondence*, iii. 111.

and the Rockinghams should have held aloof, and escaped contamination of the baseness that so rode at the top of the world.

What chance had quiet or lofty literature of attention or success amid such scenes and struggles as thus disgraced and lowered the public men of England? What hope of hearing or consideration could fall to its professors from the class that should have led the nation, when, instead of leading it, they were but offering it high examples of venality and falsehood? What possibility now existed of any kind of reward for those who had dignified their calling and snatched it from the servitude it had so long lain under? By such labors as Johnson's had been, and as Goldsmith's continued to be, they had provided for another generation of writers, if not for themselves, surer friends and better paymasters than either patron or publisher; nor was it possible for men of letters again to become, what Sir Robert Walpole made and would have kept them. Never again with abject servility, as Goldsmith, imitating Swift, pithily expresses it, could they

"importune his Grace,
Nor ever cringe to men in place,
Nor undertake a dirty job,
Nor draw the quill to write for Bob";

but what had been the effect of the change on Walpole's successors, the ministers and governors of the nation? Had they stooped to pick up the hack-livery which the Goldsmiths had flung down, and put it on to serve themselves? It seemed so. No other interest did they appear to take in the uses of literature but as a vast engine of libel, available only for the sordid trafficking, the shameless corruption, the servile submission, which in turn ruled all the factions. George Grenville had used it, to assail Conway and the Rockinghams; two new-made deans resorted to it, to uphold their patron Grafton; parson Scott had made a firebrand of it, to fling destruction at the enemies of Sandwich; Lord Temple had not scrupled to employ it

for the purpose of blackening his brother and his brother-in-law; and it had helped the unblushing Rigby to show, by jovial abuse of everybody all round, how entirely and exclusively he was his Grace the Duke of Bedford's, her Grace the Duchess's, and the whole house of Woburn's.¹ Every month, every week, had its periodical calumny. The unwieldy column of quarto and octavo, the light squadron of pamphlet and flying sheet, alike kept up the fire. "Faction only fills the town with pamphlets," wrote Johnson soon after this date,² "and greater subjects are forgotten in the noise of discord." "Politics and abuse," confesses one³ who stood behind the scenes, "have totally corrupted our taste. We might as well be given up to controversial divinity. Nobody thinks of writing a line that is to last beyond the next fortnight"; or of listening, he might have added, to a line so written. The same authority, a politician and man of rank, left an account of the literature of the day in which half a line is given to Goldsmith as "the correct author of the *Traveller*,"⁴ another to Smollett as a profligate hireling and abusive Jacobite writer, and a third to Johnson as a lumber of mean opinions and prostituted learning; but in which Mrs. Macauley's *History* is compared to Robertson's, Mr. Richard Bentley's *Patriotism* thought next in merit to the *Dunciad*, and Mr. Dalrymple's *Rodondo* counted hardly inferior to *Hudibras*; in which Mr. Hoole is discovered to be a poet, and an elegant five-shilling quarto which had appeared within the last few months with the title of the *New Bath Guide* is proclaimed to have distinguished and marked out its writer from all other men, for possession of the easiest wit, the most genuine humor, the most inoffensive satire, the most unaf-

¹ See Walpole's *George III.* iii. 115.

² *Boswell*, iii. 244.

³ Horace Walpole to Conway.—*Coll. Lett.* v. 263.

⁴ Walpole couples Goldsmith with Anstey, as both "poets of great merit" who "meddled not with politics."—*Mem. Geo. III.* iii. 172. Some account of the pamphleteers and party writers of this and the next few years will be found in Stephens's *Life of Horne Tooke*, i. 352-360; but to be taken *cum grano*.

fectured poetry, and the most harmonious melody in every kind of metre.¹

Is not the fashion as well as faction of the time thus reflected to us vividly? *Now*, all, excepting Christopher Anstey, are forgotten, of these admired ones; nor is it likely that even Anstey would have been noticed with anything but a sneer if, besides being a scholar and a wit, he had not

¹ See chapter "on the Literature of the early part of the Reign," in Horace Walpole's *Memoirs of the Reign of George III.* iii. 164. I need not, perhaps, remind the reader that in the brief space of time of which Walpole thus professes to sketch the distinguishing literature, all Sterne's writings had been produced, the best of Smollett's, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Letters*; that, not to mention the *Idler* or the *Vicar of Wakefield*, Johnson had published his edition of *Shakespeare*, Percy his *Reliques*, and Reid his *Inquiry*; and that some of Foote's best farces had been acted, with Colman's "Jealous Wife" and the "Clandestine Marriage." Not a word does Walpole vouchsafe to any of them. Omitting some hesitating praise to Churchill, some abuse of Wilkes, a mention as Franklin's of the Farmer's *Letters from Pennsylvania*, which were not Franklin's, and a few words to *Ossian*, place is given in the text to all he thinks worthy of mention; except that, in a subsequent part of the *Memoirs* (iv. 328), he has the inconceivable bad taste to characterize the delightful *Humphrey Clinker* as "a party novel, written by the profligate hireling Smollett to vindicate the Scots and cry down juries!" I may add that, in the same complimentary spirit, in a letter to Mason dated 21st July, 1772, he thus, after sneering at Garrick, Sir William Chambers, Sir John Dalrymple, and Lord Lyttelton, sums up the literary glories of the age: "What a library of poetry, taste, good sense, veracity, and vivacity! ungrateful Shebeare! indolent Smollett! trifling Johnson! piddling Goldsmith! how little have they contributed to the glory of a period in which all arts, all sciences, are encouraged and rewarded."—Mittford's *Correspondence of Walpole and Mason*, i. 32. "Indolent" in this passage is, I doubt not, a misprint for "insolent"; for these letters do not appear to have been corrected at all as they went through the press. As I have touched upon the subject, it may, perhaps, be worth quoting another of Walpole's querulous complainings as to the utter absence of all merit in the age, its literature, history, poetry, eloquence, morality, and statesmanship, since it contains the germ of a more famous and felicitous passage by a celebrated living writer. (1852.) "For my part, I take Europe to be worn out. When Voltaire dies, we may say 'Good-night!' . . . The next Augustan age will dawn on the other side of the Atlantic. There will, perhaps, be a Thucydides at Boston, a Xenophon at New York, and, in time, a Virgil at Mexico, and a Newton at Peru. At last, some curious traveller from Lima will visit England, and give a description of the ruins of St. Paul's, like the editions of Balbec and Palmyra."—*Letters to Mann*, ii. 297-301.

also been a member of Parliament. Beyond the benches of the houses, too, or the gossip of St. James's, this influence reached. It was social rank that had helped Anstey, for this poem of the *New Bath Guide*, to no less a sum than two hundred pounds; it was because Goldsmith had no other rank than as a man of letters, depressed and at that time very slowly rising, that his *Traveller* had obtained for him only twenty guineas. Even David Hume, though now accepted into the higher circles, undisturbed any longer by the "factious barbarians," and somewhat purified of late from history and philosophy by employment as Under-Secretary of State, had not lost that painful sense of the social differences between Paris and London which he expressed twelve months before the present date. "If a man have the misfortune in London to attach himself to letters, even if he succeeds, I know not with whom he is to live, nor how he is to pass his time in a suitable society. The little company there that is worth conversing with are cold and unsociable, or are warmed only by faction and cabal; so that a man who plays no part in public affairs becomes altogether insignificant, and if he is not rich, he becomes even contemptible. . . . But in Paris a man that distinguishes himself in letters meets immediately with regard and attention."¹ He complains in another letter that the best company in London are in a flame of politics; and he declines an introduction to Mr. Percy because it would be impracticable for him to cultivate his friendship, as men of letters have in London no place of rendezvous, and are indeed "sunk and forgot in the general torrent of the world."² Only one such man there was who would *not* be so sunk and forgot; his own unluckily chosen protégé Rousseau. That horrible English habit of indifference, Jean Jacques conceived to be a conspiracy to destroy him (for how could he live without being talked about?); and straightway he managed so to conduct himself that the friend who but a few short months before had called him a Socrates,³ and praised

¹ Burton's *Life of Hume*, ii. 268.

² *Burton*, ii. 385.

³ So Hume had written to Blair in December, 1765, and to Madame

his mildness, modesty, gentleness, and good-nature, declared him now to have become a compound of whim, affectation, wickedness, vanity, inquietude, madness, ingratitude, ferocity, and lying,¹ as well as "the blackest and most atrocious villain beyond comparison that now exists in the world." For he had first indicted Hume as the leader of the conspiracy, and brought him forward to answer the indictment in the *St. James's Chronicle*; and next had fallen foul of Horace Walpole as Hume's supposed vicious instrument, Bishop Warburton crying all the while with delight to see "so seraphic a madman" attack "so insufferable a coxcomb." Nothing of a literary sort, indeed, made so much noise or amusement at the close of the year as the mad libels of Rousseau, and the caricatures² issued of them, unless it were the newspaper cross-readings, which, with the witty signature of a real name, "Papyrius Cursor," that rendered its aptness so whimsical, Caleb Whitefoord published in December (wherein the public were informed that "this

de Boufflers in January, 1766 (*Private Correspondence*, 180), with the reservation that his friend suffered by the comparison. And see Warburton's *Letters*, 386-387.

¹ So wrote Hume to Adam Smith in October, 1766. The reader will find more than enough of this quarrel in the fifth volume of Walpole's *Letters*; in the *Private Correspondence* of Hume (4to, 1820), particularly at pp. 142-167, 169-208, and 212-230; in the second vol. (295-380) of Mr. Burton's *Life of Hume*; in the same editor's *Letters of Eminent Persons to Hume* (1849), *passim*; and in the preface to Hume's *Philosophical Works* (Ed. 1825, i. xxix-cxix); but the most brief and compact account of Hume's conduct in it, with a very pleasing sketch of his general character, is, I think, in Hardy's *Life of Lord Charlemont*, 120-124. I may add that, a year or two after his return to France, Rousseau admitted that he had been to blame in the quarrel, and characteristically ascribed it to a mental affliction produced by the foggy climate of England. See Brougham's *Men of Letters of George III.* i. 231. The same thing is repeated in other terms in Hume's *Private Correspondence*, 225-226, 241-242, and 246.

² "There is even a print engraved of it," writes Hume to the Countess de Boufflers. "M. Rousseau is represented as a Yahoo, newly caught in the woods; I am represented as a farmer, who caresses him and offers him some oats to eat, which he refuses in a rage; Voltaire and d'Alembert are whipping him up behind; and Horace Walpole making him horns of papier-maché. The idea is not altogether absurd."—*Private Correspondence*, 234.

morning the Right Hon. the Speaker was convicted of keeping a disorderly house," that "Lord Chatham took his seat and was severely handled by the populace," and that "yesterday Dr. Jones preached at St. James's and performed it with ease in less than fifteen minutes," with other as surprising items of information), and at which the town is described to have wept with laughter.¹ Goldsmith envied nothing so much, we are assured, as the authorship of this humorous sally; and would gladly have exchanged for it his own most successful writings.² Half sad and half satirical, perhaps he thus contrasted its reception with theirs.

The young German student to whom allusion has been made, speaking from his judgment of the book that so enchanted him, had thought its author must have reason "thankfully to acknowledge he was an Englishman, and to reckon highly the advantages which his country and nation afforded him." But would Goethe without limitation have said this if there had lain before him the two entries from a bookseller's papers wherewith the biographer of the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* must close the year 1766 and open the year 1767? "Received from Mr. Newbery," says the first, dated the 28th of December, "five guineas for writing a short English grammar. OLIVER GOLDSMITH." "To cash," says the second, dated the 6th of January, lent Dr. Goldsmith one pound one. JOHN NEWBERY."³

¹ *Coll. Lett.* v. 175.

² Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i. 217.

³ "Received from Mr. Newbery five guineas for writing a short English grammar. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Decr. 28, 1766." "Dr. Goldsmith. Dr. To Cash lent Jan. 6, 1767, £1 1s. 0d."—*Newbery MSS.*

CHAPTER XVI

THEATRES ROYAL COVENT GARDEN AND DRURY LANE

1767

THE opening, then, of the twelfth year of Oliver Goldsmith's career as a man of letters, which finds him author of the *Citizen of the World*, the *Traveller*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield*, finds him also writing a short English grammar for five guineas and borrowing of his publisher the sum of one pound one. But thus scantily eking out his necessities with hack employment and parsimonious lendings, his dramatic labor had meanwhile been in progress. The venture I have described as in the dawn was now about to struggle into day. He had taken for his model the older English comedy. He thought Congreve's astonishing wit too exuberant for the stage; and for truth to nature, vivacity, life, and spirit, placed Farquhar first. With what was called the genteel or sentimental school that had since prevailed, and of which Steele was the originator, he felt no sympathy; and cared chiefly for the "Jealous Wife" and the "Clandestine Marriage" because they had shown the power to break through those trammels. What his countryman Farquhar had done he resolved to attempt; and in that hearty hope had planned his play. With the help of nature, humor, and character, should these be in his reach, he would invoke the spirit of laughter, happy, unrestrained, and cordial; all the more surely, as he reckoned, if with Garrick's help, and King's, and Yates's; though without them, if so compelled. For not in their names, or after Garrick's fashion, had he set down his exits and entrances,¹ nor to suit peculiarities of

¹ See vol. iii. 7-8. And for a strong condemnation of the practice, see the *Citizen of the World*, letter lxxix.

theirs were his mirthful incidents devised. Upon no stage picture of the humorous, however vivid, but upon what he had seen and known himself of the humorous in actual life, he was determined to venture all, believing that what was real in manners, however broad or low, if in decency endurable and pointing to no illiberal moral, could never be justly condemned as vulgar. And for this he had Johnson's approval. Indifferent to nothing that affected his friend, nor ever sluggish where help was wanted or active kindness needed to be done, Johnson promised to write a prologue to the comedy. For again had he lately shown himself in Gerrard Street; again had the Club reunited its members; and, once more in the society of Reynolds, Johnson, and Burke, Goldsmith was eager to forget his carking poverty and to count up his growing pretensions to greatness and esteem.

What Boswell calls "one of the most remarkable incidents of Johnson's life" was now matter of conversation at the Club. In February the King had taken occasion to see and hold some conversation with him on one of his visits to the royal library, where, by permission of the librarian, he frequently consulted books. The effect produced by the incident is a social curiosity of the time. Endless was the interest of it; the marvel of it never to be done with. "He loved to relate it with all its circumstances," says Boswell, "when requested by his friends"; and "Come now, sir, this is an interesting matter; do favor us with it," was the cry of every friend in turn. So, often was the story repeated. How the King had asked Johnson if he was then writing anything, and he had answered he was not, for he had pretty well told the world what he knew, and must now read to acquire more knowledge. How the King said he did not think Johnson borrowed much from anybody; and the other, venturing to think he had done his part as a writer, was handsomely assured, "I would have thought so too if you had not written so well." How his Majesty next observed that he supposed he must already have read a great deal, to which Johnson replied that he thought

more than he read, and, for instance, had not read much compared with Dr. Warburton; whereto the King rejoined that he heard Dr. Warburton was a man of such general knowledge that his learning resembled Garrick's acting in its universality. How his Majesty afterwards asked if there were any other literary journals published in the kingdom except the *Monthly Review* and *Critical Review*, and being told there was no other, inquired which of them was best; whereupon Johnson replied that the *Monthly Review* was done with most care, and the *Critical* upon the best principles, for that the authors of the *Monthly* were enemies to the Church, which the King said he was sorry to hear. How his Majesty talked of the University libraries, of Sir John Hill's veracity, and of Lord Lyttelton's history; and how he proposed that the literary biography of the country should be undertaken by Johnson, who thereupon signified his readiness to comply with the royal wishes (of which he never heard another syllable). How, during the whole of the interview, to use the description given to Boswell by the librarian, Johnson talked to his Majesty with profound respect, but still in his firm, manly manner, with a sonorous voice, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing-room. And how, at the end of it, the flattered sage protested that the manners of the bucolic young sovereign, "let them talk of them as they will," were those of as fine a gentleman as Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second could have been.¹ "Ah!" said the charmed and charming Sévigné when *her* King had danced with her, "c'est le plus grand roi du monde!"

"And did you say *nothing*, sir," asked one of the circle who stood round Johnson at Mr. Reynolds's when he detailed the interview there, "to the King's high compliment on your writing?" "No, sir," answered Johnson, with admirable taste. "When the King had said it, it was to be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my Sover-

¹ Boswell, iii. 22-27.

eign." Highly characteristic of him was what he added as his opinion of the advantage of such an interview. "I found," he said, in answer to the frank and lively questioning of Joseph Warton, "his Majesty wished I should talk, and I made it my business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his Sovereign. In the first place, *a man cannot be in a passion*—"¹ Here he was stopped; but he had said enough. The consciousness of his own too frequent habit of roaring down an adversary in conversation, from which such men as the Wartons as well as Goldsmith suffered, could hardly have been more amusingly confessed; and it is possible that Joseph Warton may have remembered it in the courteous severity of his retort when Johnson so fiercely fell upon him at Reynolds's a few years later. "Sir, I am not used to be contradicted." "Better for yourself and friends, sir, if you were. Our admiration could not be increased, but our love might."²

One of the listeners, standing near Johnson, when he began his narrative, had, during the course of it, silently retreated from the circle. "Dr. Goldsmith," says Boswell, "remained unmoved upon a sofa at some distance, affecting not to join in the least in the eager curiosity of the company. He assigned as a reason for his gloom and seeming inattention that he apprehended Johnson had relinquished his purpose of furnishing him with a prologue to his play, with the hopes of which he had been flattered; but it was strongly suspected, that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honor Dr. Johnson had lately enjoyed. At length the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprang from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and in a kind of flutter, from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed: 'Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it.'"

¹ Boswell, iii. 27.

² Wooll's *Biographical Memoirs of Joseph Warton*, 98.

Poor Goldsmith might have reason to be anxious about his prologue, for his play had brought him nothing but anxiety. *In theatro sedet atra cura*. A letter lies before me from Horace Walpole's neighbor, Kitty Clive, who writes expressively though she spells ill (the great Mrs. Pritchard used to talk of her "gownd"),¹ assuring her friend Colman that "vexation and fretting in a theatre are the foundation of all Billous complaints. I speak by experience. I have been fretted by managers till my gaul has overflow'd like the river Nile"; and precisely thus it befell Goldsmith. His comedy completed, Kitty's "billous" complaint began; and there was soon an overflow of gall. Matters could not have fallen out worse for any chance of advantageous approach to Garrick, and the new dramatist's thoughts, therefore, turned at first to the other house. While the play was in progress it was undoubtedly intended for Beard. But Covent Garden theatre was in such confusion from Rich's death, and Beard's doubts and deafness, that Goldsmith resolved to make trial of Garrick.

¹ So Johnson told Mrs. Siddons; "but," he added, "when she appeared upon the stage she seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding."—*Boswell*, viii. 238. Perhaps he connected her uneasily with his recollections of "Irene;" but there seems to have been a downright sincerity and passion in her acting, whether of comedy or tragedy, which her audiences could not resist:

"Before such merits all objections fly,
Pritchard's genteel." . . .

Nor can I believe, from the accounts which exist of her extraordinary powers, that Johnson is not in error when he stated on another occasion that "she had never read the tragedy of 'Macbeth' all through."—*Boswell*, v. 293. One would hardly suppose from her letters that Mrs. Clive was much of a scholar; yet it was her wit and sense off the stage that charmed Johnson even more than her unrivalled genius upon it. Langton tells us he was very easy and facetious with the players in the old days of "Irene," and used to talk with Mrs. Clive more than with any of them. He said: "Clive, sir, is a good thing to sit by; she always understands what you say." And she said in turn of him: "I love to sit by Dr. Johnson; he always entertains me."—vii. 355. Many years later he told George Steevens: "At that period, sir, all the wenches knew me, and dropped me a curtsy as they passed onto the stage. But since poor Goldsmith's last comedy I scarcely recollect having seen the inside of a play-house—*Johnsoniana* in *Boswell*, ix. 196.

They do not seem to have met since their first luckless meeting, but Reynolds now interposed to bring them together; and at the painter's house in Leicester Square Goldsmith placed in Garrick's hands the manuscript of the "Good-natured Man." Tom Davies was afterwards at some pains to describe what he conceived to have been the tenor of their interview, and tells us that the manager, being at all times fully conscious of his own merit, was perhaps more ostentatious of his abilities to serve a dramatic author than became a man of his prudence, while the poet, on his side, was as fully persuaded of his own importance and independent greatness. Mr. Garrick expected "that the writer would esteem the patronage of his play as a favor," but "Goldsmith rejected all ideas of kindness in a bargain that was intended to be of mutual advantage to both parties."¹ Both were in error, and providing cares and bitterness for each other, of which the heaviest portion fell naturally on the weakest shoulders. Mere pride must always be injurious to all men; but where it cannot itself afford that the very claim it sets up should succeed, deplorable, indeed, is its humiliation.

Let us admit that, in this matter of patronage, the poet might not improperly have consented at the first to what with an ill grace he was driven to consent to at last. He was possibly too eager to visit upon the actor his resentment of the want of another kind of patronage; and to interpose uneasy remembrances of a former quarrel, before what should have been a real sense of what was due to Garrick, and a proper concession of it.² Johnson had no love of patronage, but he would not have counselled this. Often, when most bitter on the same angry theme, and venting with the least scruple his rage at the actor's foppery, would he stop

¹ *Life of Garrick*, ii. 153.

² It was doubtless with a relation to this matter Goldsmith had remarked to Reynolds that "he could not suffer such airs of superiority from one who was only a poor player," which the kindly Reynolds so quietly rebuked: "No, no, don't say that; he is no *poor* player, surely."—Northcote's *Life*, i. 287.

to remind himself of the consideration Garrick needed after all, and of how little in reality he assumed. For then, all generous and tolerant as at heart Johnson was, not a merit or advantage of his fellow-townsmen's unexampled success, since the day they entered London together with fourpence between them,¹ but would rise and plead in his behalf. The popular actor's intercourse with the great,² his absolute control of crowds of dependants, his sprightliness as a writer and talker equalled by few, his immense acquired wealth, the elevation and social esteem he had conferred upon his calling, and the applause he had forever had sounded in his ears and dashed in his face—all would in succession array themselves in Johnson's mind till he was fain to protest, philosopher as he was, that if all that had happened to *him*, if lords and ladies had flattered him, if sovereigns and states-

¹ "He and another neighbor of mine, one Mr. Johnson, set out this morning for London together: Davy Garrick to be with you early the next week; and Mr. Johnson to try his fate with a tragedy, and to see to get himself employed in some translation, either from the Latin or the French. Johnson is a very good scholar and poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy-writer." So wrote Gilbert Walmsley "to the Rev. Mr. Colson, at his house in Rochester, Kent," from Lichfield on the 2d of March, 1736-1737. Johnson and Garrick arrived together in London on the 9th of March. It was Dr. Barnard (Bishop of Killaloe) who told Boswell the anecdote referred to in the text. At a dinner where himself and Garrick were present, Johnson, fixing a date, remarked, "That was the year when I came to London with twopence-halfpenny in my pocket." Garrick, overhearing him, exclaimed, "Eh? what do you say? with twopence-halfpenny in your pocket?" "JOHNSON: 'Why, yes; when I came with twopence-halfpenny in *my* pocket, and thou, Davy, with three-halfpence in thine.'"—*Life*, i. 110.

² For one of his parties at Hampton, described by Horace Walpole, see vol. ii. 52-53. Admirably did Johnson say, on another occasion, when Wilkes was attacking Garrick in the year after his death as a man who had no friend, "I believe he is right, sir. Οἱ φίλοι, οὐ φίλος—he had friends, but no friend. Garrick was so diffused, he had no man to whom he wished to unbosom himself. He found people always ready to applaud him, and that always for the same thing; so he saw life with great uniformity. Garrick," he continued, "was a very good man, the cheer-fullest man of his age; a decent liver in a profession which is supposed to give indulgence to licentiousness; and a man who gave away freely money acquired by himself."—*Boswell*, vii. 261-262.

men had petted him, and if the public had adored him, he must have had a couple of fellows with long poles continually walking before him to knock down everybody that stood in the way. "Consider, sir, if all this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they'd have jumped over the moon. Yet," he added, smiling, "Garriek speaks to us."¹ The condescension of patronage was at least a very harmless long pole, and Goldsmith might have taken a few taps from it. A mere sensitive though clever thinker like Hans Andersen, fretting behind the scenes, will talk of an actor putting himself in one scale and all the rest of the world in another; but a profoundly just man like Goethe, wise in a theatre as everywhere else, will show you that the actor's love of admiration is a part of his means to please, and that he is nothing if he seem not something to himself and others. Not to be omitted, at the same time, and not to be palliated, is Garriek's large share of blame in this special instance. His first professions should not have merged, as they did, into excuses and delays; but should have taken, either way, a decisive tone. Keeping up fair words of success to Goldsmith, it would seem he gave private assurances to Johnson and Reynolds that the comedy could not possibly succeed. Interviews followed at his own house; explanations and proposals for alteration; doubtful acquiescence and doubtful withdrawal of it. Matters stood thus, the season meanwhile passing to its close, when Goldsmith, whose wants had never been so urgent, and whose immediate chances of relieving them had been lost through Garriek's delays, thought himself justified in asking the manager to advance him a small sum upon a note of one of the Newberys. Garriek had at this time renewed his promise to act the play;

¹ *Boswell*, vii. 98-100. On the same occasion Johnson asserted Garriek's liberality and charity, though he added: "With his domestic saving we have nothing to do. I remember drinking tea with him long ago, when Peg Woffington made it, and he grumbled at her for making it too strong. He had then begun to feel money in his purse, and did not know when he should have enough of it." When he told the same story to Reynolds, he said that Garriek's expostulation to Peg about the tea was in these words, "Why, it is as red as blood!" And see vol. ii. 195.

and was in all probability very glad to lend the money, and profit by what advantage it might offer him. It is certain that soon afterwards he suggested to the luckless dramatist, as essential to his success, a series of important alterations which were at once and with some indignation rejected.

The leading characters in the piece were three; and are understood to remain, at present, much as when they left Garrick's hands. In *Honeywood*, who gives the comedy its title,¹

¹ The "Good-natured Man." It is not uninteresting that, apparently quite unknown to Goldsmith, Fielding should have written a comedy with this precise title a few years before his death. It was the last of his performances for the stage, and its history is rather curious. It was, of course, handed by Fielding to Garrick, who appears to have asked Sir Charles Hanbury Williams to read it; and on Sir Charles accepting the mission to Russia, the manuscript accompanied him to those inhospitable parts. Meanwhile Garrick had forgotten all about it; the great novelist was dead; and to the inquiries of his brother and friends, who found allusions to it in his papers and wished to recover it, the Drury Lane manager could give no satisfactory clue. But after nearly twenty years Garrick was asked to look at a tattered and much-injured MS. comedy which Sir Charles Williams was supposed to have written, and had not read a page when he jumped out of his chair with the delighted exclamation, "Why, this is Harry Fielding's lost comedy!" This was two years after Goldsmith's death. In the following year, with alterations by himself and Sheridan, and with one of his prologues full of witty and genial allusion to Fielding's immortal novels, the comedy was acted with only moderate success; but Goldsmith having meanwhile appropriated the chief title, it was called "The Fathers; or, the Good-natured Man," and so appears in Murphy's edition of Fielding. Connected with it, I regret to add, a bitter dispute arose between Sir John Fielding and Garrick, among whose unpublished papers I find several allusions to it. For example, one of Sir John Fielding's angriest letters is thus endorsed, in Garrick's handwriting: "The beginning of my correspondence with Sir John Fielding was thus: His brother, the late Mr. Fielding, was my particular Friend; he had written a Comedy called the 'Good-natured Man,' which, being lent to his different friends, was lost for twenty years. It luckily fell to my lot to discover it. Had I found a mine of gold upon my own land, it could not have given me more pleasure. I immediately went to his brother, Sir John, and told him the story of my discovery, and immediately with all the warmth imaginable offered my services to prepare it for the Stage. He thanked me cordially and we parted with mutual expressions of kindness." To this I will add the concluding passages (on the whole very honorable to Garrick) of the letter with which he met Sir John's most

we have occasional conscious glance, not to be mistaken, at the writer's own infirmities. Nor is there any disposition to make light of them. Perhaps the errors which arise from easiness of disposition and tend to unintentional confusions of right and wrong have never been touched with a happier severity. Splendid as they seem, and borrowing still the name from some neighboring duty, they are shown for what they really are; and not all our liking for good-nature, nor all the mirth it gives us in this comedy, can prevent our seeing, with its help, that there is a charity which may be a great injustice, a sort of benevolence for which weakness would be the better name, and friendship that may be nothing but credulity. In Croaker we have the contrast and foil to this, and one of the best drawn characters of modern comedy. In the way of wit, Wycherly and Con-

petulant explosion. The allusion to "the innocent" is to the family of the great novelist, for whose benefit the comedy was to be put on the stage. "We will, if you please, not be the trumpets of our own virtues (as Shakespeare says), but take care that the innocent do not suffer by our mistakes. There shall be no Anathema denounced against them by me. If my thoughts and alteration of the plan of the 'Good-natured Man' will be of the least service to their welfare, I will go on with my scribbling with pleasure; though my health is at present so precarious that I am really afraid to undertake the whole (for much is wanted) lest the business should be retarded by my leaving London or the kingdom. What could you possibly mean by saying that the mischief to the poor innocent family would not be so great as my anger teaches me to believe? Surely these, Sir John, were the dictates of *your* anger and not *mine*; and I will venture to say that now it is passed you are sorry that you said it, as barbarity is as great a stranger to my nature as falsehood is to yours. If you have obliged and honored me I thank you: that you never were in the way to be obliged by me is certain, or I should certainly have done it. Some reciprocal acts of kindness passed between your Brother and me too trifling to be mentioned—but his praise is fame. You might have guessed at my warmth to you and yours by the pleasure I had in the discovery of the lost treasure. What you have said kindly I will remember; what unkindly I will forget. I will not say Farewell. D. GARRICK." In another letter, less good-natured, and which on better thoughts Garrick appears to have withheld, the actor ridicules the angry magistrate's style of passing from the third to the first person in his letters. He does not appear to have known that this was an ordinary habit with Sir John. See *Grenville Correspondence*, ii. 366-367.

grave have done few things better; and Farquhar himself could not have surpassed the heartiness of it or thrown into the croaking a more unctuous enjoyment. We feel it to be a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with Croaker. His friend Dick Doleful was quite right when he discovered that he rhymed to joker. The *Rambler's* brief sketch of "Suspirius, the screech-owl," supplied some hints for the character;¹ but

¹ "Johnson told me that he acknowledged this to him."—*Boswell*, i. 250. Again: "I observed it was the Suspirius of his *Rambler* (No. 59). He said Goldsmith had owned he had borrowed it from thence."—iii. 38. I would venture to say, notwithstanding, that Goldsmith seems to have borrowed more largely from one of his own essays in filling in the rich touches of the character than from anything of Johnson's. In the sketch of the philosopher in the *Citizen of the World*, for example (letter xcii.), whose science has only the effect of making him miserable, we are continually reminded of Croaker (now and then, too, of Swift's immortal Laputa), and his glorious absurdities. Let me quote one or two entries from the doleful philosopher's diary: "The moon is, I find, at her old pranks. Her appulses, librations, and other irregularities, indeed, amaze me. My daughter, too, is this morning gone off with a grenadier. No way surprising. I was never able to give her a relish for wisdom. She ever promised to be a mere expletive in the creation. But the moon, the moon gives me real uneasiness." "The obliquity of the equator with the ecliptic is now twenty minutes less than when it was observed two thousand years ago by Piteas. If this be the case, in six thousand the obliquity will be still less by a whole degree, . . . and in the space of about a million of years England will actually travel to the Antarctic pole. I shudder at the change! How shall our unhappy grandchildren endure the hideous climate! A million of years will soon be accomplished; they are but a moment when compared to eternity; then shall our charming country, as I may say, in a moment of time, resemble the hideous wilderness of Nova Zembla. . . . To-night, by my calculation, the long-predicted comet is to make its first appearance. Heavens! what terrors are impending over our little dim speck of earth! Dreadful visitation! Are we to be scorched in its fires, or only smothered in the vapor of its tail? That is the question! Thoughtless mortals, go build houses, plant orchards, purchase estates, for to-morrow you die. But what if the comet should not come? That would be equally fatal. Comets are servants which periodically return to supply the sun with fuel. If our sun, therefore, should be disappointed of the expected supply, and all his fuel be in the mean time burned out, he must expire like an exhausted taper. What a miserable situation must our earth be in without his enlivening rays! . . . The comet has not yet appeared. I am sorry for it: first, sorry because my calculation is false; secondly, sorry lest the sun should want fuel; thirdly,

the masterly invention and rich breadth of comedy which made a living man out of this half page of a book were entirely Goldsmith's. It is the business of the stage to deal with what lies about us most familiarly, *humanitas humanissima*; and it is the test of a dramatist of genius that he should make matters of this kind, in themselves the least remote, appear to be the most original. No one had seen him on the stage before; yet every one had known, or been, his own Croaker. For all the world is forever croaking, more or less; and only a few know why. "Never mind the world," says the excellent Mrs. Croaker to her too anxious lord; "never mind the world, my dear; you were never in a pleasanter place in your life." On the other hand, who does not feel that Mr. Croaker is also right after his fashion? "There's the advantage of fretting away our misfortunes beforehand; we never feel them when they come." In excellent harmony with these imaginary misfortunes, too, are the ideal acquaintances of Lofty; as new to the stage and as commonly met with in the street. Jack Lofty is the first of the family of Jack Brags, who have since been so laughter-moving in books as well as theatres; nor is his mirth without a moral. "I begin to find that the man who first invented the art of speaking truth was a much cunninger fellow than I thought him." This was Mrs. Inchbald's favorite character; when it fell into the hands of the admirable Lewis, on the play's reproduction half a century since, it became a general favorite; and when a proposed revival of the comedy was interrupted a few years ago by the abrupt termination of the best theatrical management within my recollection, it was the character selected for personation by the celebrated actor who then held Garrick's office and power in the theatre.¹

sorry lest the wits should laugh at our erroneous predictions; and, fourthly, sorry because if it appears to-night, it must necessarily come within the sphere of the earth's attraction, and Heaven help the unhappy country on which it happens to fall!"

¹ The allusion is to Mr. Macready, who contemplated the revival of the "Good-natured Man" during his last season at Drury Lane.

Yet on the unlucky Lofty it was that the weight of Garrick's hostile criticism descended. He pointed out that, according to the construction of the comedy, its important figures were Croaker and Honeywood; that anything which drew off attention from them must damage the theatrical effect; and that a new character should be introduced, not to divide interest or laughter with theirs, but to bring out their special contrasts more broadly. It was a criticism unworthy of Garrick, because founded on the most limited stage notions; yet he adhered to it pertinaciously. He would play the alteration if made; but he would not play the comedy as it stood. Goldsmith made in the first instance very violent objections; softened into remonstrance and persuasion, which he found equally unavailing; is described to have written many letters which displayed in more than the confusion of their language and the unsteadiness of their writing the anxiety and eagerness of the writer; and at last, under the bitter goad of his pecuniary wants, is understood to have made partial concession. But it had come too late. The alterations were certainly not made, though the comedy remained some time longer in Garrick's hands. There was a long fluctuation between doubt and encouragement, says the *Percy Memoir*, "with his usual uncertainty." The truth appears to have been that the more Garrick examined the comedy, the less available to his views he found it; and he was at last driven to an expedient he had before found serviceable, when more had been promised than he was able to perform, and his authorial relations were become somewhat complex. He proposed a sort of arbitration. But poor Goldsmith smarted more under this than any other part of the tedious negotiation; and on Garrick's proceeding to name for his arbitrator Whitehead the laureate, who was acting at the time as his "reader" of new plays for Drury Lane, a dispute of so much vehemence and anger ensued that the services of Burke as well as Reynolds were needed to moderate the disputants. Of all the manager's slights of the poet this was forgotten last; and occasion to

recall it was always seized with bitterness. There was in the following year a hideously unintelligible play, called "Zingis," forced upon Garrick by a "distinguished officer in the Indian service," and by Garrick forced nine nights upon the public, as to which the same process again took place, under resolute protest from the gallant author. "I think it very unnecessary," said the gallant Colonel Alexander Dow, and being a stronger man than Goldsmith he carried his point, "to submit the tragedy to any man's judgment but yours. . . . I know not in what manner Dr. Goldsmith came to a knowledge of this transaction; but it is certain that he mentioned it publicly last night at Ranelagh to a gentleman who asked me, in a jeering manner, *What sentence the committee of critics had passed on my play?*"¹

Such was the state of affairs and of feeling between Garrick and Goldsmith when a piece of news came suddenly to their knowledge in no small degree interesting to both. Beard's uncertainty as to his own and his father-in-law's property in Covent Garden had closed at last, in a very unexpected arrangement. Early in the May of this year Colman's mother (who was sister to Lady Bath) died, leaving him a legacy of six thousand pounds; and this strengthened him for a step of which it is probable that Garrick, in a letter already quoted, threw out the first brooding germ. They had but patched and darned their quarrel;² and on the occasion of a comedy by Colman from Voltaire ("The Eng-

¹ *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 306. Colonel Dow was now living with James Macpherson, the translator of Ossian, the full-mouthed style of which had been his tragic model. Carlyle dined with him in London at the time, meeting at his table "Dr. John Douglas and Garrick, the two Macphersons, John Home, and David Hume"; and relates a story he told them of having had charge of the Great Mogul with two regiments under his command at Delhi, and of having had a strong temptation to dethrone the monarch and mount the throne in his stead, "which he said he could easily have done"; replying to Carlyle's inquiry what caused him to desist, "that it was reflecting on what his old schoolfellows at Dunbar would think of him for being guilty of such an action."—*Autobiography*, 505.

² *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 253.

lish Merchant") produced in this preceding February, new rents had shown themselves. Meanwhile it was reported that two men of mere business, named Harris and Rutherford, were in treaty with Beard; but another rumor was with greater difficulty believed, to the effect that inducements had been successfully thrown out to Powell, notwithstanding his habit, according to his own letters, of teaching his wife and children to bless Garrick's name, to withdraw him from his Drury Lane engagements and enlist him in hostility to Garrick. "I have not always met with gratitude in a play-house," had been the latter's remark, while Powell's gratitude was overflowing; and here was an illustration of it quite unexpected. There is no reason to doubt the interest which, in the midst of all his jealousies of temperament, the great actor had evinced for his young competitor; and from a narrative which necessarily throws into prominence the weaker points of his character, it should not be omitted that he really loved his art and desired always to see it advanced in esteem. "Make sure of your ground in every step you take," had been his advice to Powell. "The famous Baron,¹ of France, used to say that an actor should be *nursed in the lap of queens*, by which he meant that the best accomplishments were necessary to form a great actor.* Read at your leisure other books besides plays in which you are concerned. Do not sacrifice your taste and feelings to applause; convert an audience to *your* manner; do not be converted to theirs." It was ill return to find Powell now secretly deserting to the camp of the enemy! "It is impossible that it should hurt us," Garrick nevertheless wrote to his brother, with a sense that it would hurt them visible in every line. "If Powell is to be director, we have reason to rejoice; for he is finely calculated for management. What a strange affair! We shall know all in time. I am satisfied, be the news true or false."²

¹ The French actor, Baron. Grimm records the saying in proof of Baron's preposterous vanity. The letter quoted is that of December, 1764.
—*Garrick Correspondence*, i. 177-178. See vol. ii. 142-143, and 182-183.

² *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 254.



and intercession of a famous beauty; and Colman, having added to his mother's legacy by a loan from Becket, the bookseller, consented to supply Powell's ignorance of management and become purchaser of the fourth share. The matter was finally arranged; another important desertion was effected from Drury Lane in the person of Yates and his wife (an exquisite, gentle actress, though Kitty Olive, in one of her letters,¹ objects to her habit of "totering about to much, and flumping down to often"); and the agreements were signed before Garrick again wrote from Bath to his brother. He was now uneasy enough. "Powell is a scoundrel," he said, "and Colman will repent his conjunction in every vein. . . . I hope to God that my partner has not talked with Powell of an agreement, or a friendly intercourse, between the houses; that would be ruin indeed! I cannot forgive Powell."² His partner, Lacy, *had* so spoken, and had indiscreetly promised a continuance of friendship. This Garrick at once withdrew; and exacting, as he had a perfect right to do, Powell's bond of a thousand pounds forfeited by the breach of his engagement, he brought over Barry and Mrs. Dancer to Drury Lane by a bribe of £1500 a year, and openly prepared for war.

¹ *Penes me*. Sir Joshua Reynolds related that when he and Garrick sat together in the orchestra on the first night of Jephson's "Braganza," he saw Garrick suffused with tears at Mrs. Yates. James Harris (the author of *Hermes*) thus describes to Dr. Hoadly her benefit in the following Covent Garden season: "Never a fuller—pit and boxes thrown together: she acted the part of Electra in the 'Orestes' of Voltaire, translated on purpose for her. For tone, and justness of elocution, for uninterrupted attention, for everything that was nervous, various, elegant, and true in attitudes and action, I never saw her equal but in Garrick, and forgive me for saying I cannot call him her superior. . . . Fame reports her to have had interviews this summer at Paris with the incomparable Madame Clairon. She is soon to act Medea, for the benefit of her husband.—Wool's *Biographical Memoirs of Joseph Warton*, 342.

² *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 256. And see this great theatrical feud intelligently and fairly stated in the prefatory memoir to *Garrick Correspondence*, i. xlv.—xlv. xlvii.—xlviii. See also Murphy's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 48–49; and Peake's *Colman Family*, i. 192–198. Further notices of the dispute, and much curious matter in reference to the new theatrical management, will be found in Foote's *Life of Murphy*, 346, etc.

From the Yateses, with whom he was well acquainted, Goldsmith probably heard of all this while in progress, and naturally with some satisfaction. He made immediate overtures to Colman. By midsummer, Powell being in Bristol and the other two partners abroad, Colman was in the thick of his new duties; and, fortunately for Goldsmith, being left to make his preparations alone, his first acts of management (as he afterwards stated during his disputes with his fellow-patentees) were "the receiving a comedy of Dr. Goldsmith, and making an engagement with Mr. Macklin," without consulting Harris and Rutherford, as he knew not where to direct to them. Very creditable, in all its circumstances, was this manifestation of sympathy on Colman's part to an untried brother dramatist; and Goldsmith, though so wearied already with his dramatic experience as to have resolved that his first should be his last comedy, might fairly think and rejoice, for others if not for himself, that dramatic poets were likely for the future to have a protector who would decline taking advantage of their dependent situation, and scorn the importance derivable from trifling with their anxieties. The words are in a letter he addressed to Colman, which now lies before me, which was found the other day among the papers of Colman's successor at the Haymarket;¹ and of which I here present a fac-simile to the reader. A man's handwriting is part of himself, and helps to complete his portraiture.

¹ For this letter, found among the papers of the late Mr. Morris, the proprietor of the Haymarket theatre, I am indebted to the kindness of his executor, my friend, Mr. George Raymond.

Temple, Garden Court;

July 19th
Dear Sir,

I am very much obliged to you, both for your kind/partiality in my favour, and your kindness in shortening the interval of my expectation. That the play is liable to many objections I well know, but I am happy that it is in hands the most capable in the world of removing them. If then Dear Sir, you will complete your

favours by putting the piece
into such a state as it may
be acted, or of directing me
how to do it I shall ever
retain a sense of your good-
ness to me. And indeed this
most probably ~~the~~ this be the
last I shall ever write yet
I can't help feeling a secret
satisfaction that poets
for the future are likely to
have a protector who de-
clines taking advantage of
their dependent situation, and
borrows that importance which

may be acquired by trifling
with their anxieties.

I am Dear Sir with
the greatest esteem your most
obedient humble servant;

Oliver Goldsmith.

To
George Colman Esq.
Richmond.

Having taken this decisive step, Goldsmith wrote on the following day to the now rival manager, who had left town for Lichfield; and, though his letter shows the coolness which had arisen between them, it is a curious proof of his deference to the sensitiveness of Garrick that he should use only the name of the old Covent Garden patentee, and put forth what he had recently done with his play under cover of his original intention in respect to it. His letter is dated London, July 20, 1767, and runs thus: "Sir,—A few days ago Mr. Beard renewed his claim to the piece which I had written for his stage, and had as a friend submitted to your perusal. As I found you had very great difficulties about that piece, I complied with his desire; thinking it wrong to

take up the attention of my friends with such petty concerns as mine, or to load your good-nature by a compliance rather with their requests than my merits. I am extremely sorry that you should think me warm at our last meeting; your judgment certainly ought to be free, especially in a matter which must in some measure concern your own credit and interest. I assure you, sir, I have no disposition to differ with you on this or any other account, but am with an high opinion of your abilities and a very real esteem, sir, your most obedient, humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH." To this Garrick answered by a letter, dated five days later from Lichfield, in these terms: "Sir,—I was at Birmingham when your letter came to this place, or I should have thanked you for it immediately. I was, indeed, much hurt that your warmth at our last meeting mistook my sincere and friendly attention to your play, for the remains of a former misunderstanding which I had as much forgot as if it had never existed. What I said to you at my own house I now repeat, that I felt more pain in giving my sentiments than you possibly would in receiving them. It has been the business and ambition of my life to live upon the best terms with men of genius; and as I know that Dr. Goldsmith will have no reason to change his present friendly disposition towards me, I shall be glad of any future opportunity to convince him how much I am his obedient servant and well-wisher, D. GARRICK."

Thus fairly launched was this great theatrical rivalry, which received even additional zest from the spirit with which Foote was now beginning his first regular campaign in the Haymarket,¹ by right of the summer patent the Duke of

¹ He had pulled down the old theatre in the recess, and having rebuilt it as it now stands, opened it in May, 1767, with "an occasional prelude."—Bee's *Life of Foote*, prefixed to the *Works*, i. cxxiv. The original theatre had been appropriated to the performance of French plays, at that time a highly fashionable amusement. I copy from a newspaper of 15th December, 1720, the announcement of its first opening: "At the New Theatre in the Haymarket, between Little Suffolk Street and James Street, which is now completely finished, will be performed a French comedy, as soon as the rest of the actors arrive from Paris."

York had obtained for him (some compensation for the accident at Lord Mexborough's the preceding summer, when a practical joke of the Duke's cost Foote his leg), and with help of the two great reinforcements already secured for Drury Lane, of Barry and his betrothed, Mrs. Dancer, afterwards his wife. They played in a poor and somewhat absurd tragedy called the "Countess of Salisbury," which had made a vast sensation in Dublin; and it is related of Goldsmith, as an instance of the zeal with which he had embarked against the Drury Lane party, that he took whimsical occasion during its performance of turning a crowded and till then favorable audience suddenly against the tragical Countess and her representative, by ludicrous allusion to another kind of actress then figuring on a wider stage. He had sat out four foolish acts with great calmness and apparent temper; but as the plot thickened in the fifth, and the scene became filled with "blood" and "slaughter," he got up from his seat in a great hurry, cried out, very audibly, "*Brownrigg! Brownrigg! by God!*" and left the theatre.¹ It may have been partisanship, but it was also very pardonable wit.

Nor, if partisanship may be justified at any time, was it here without its excuses. He had reason to think Colman embarked in a good work, and for which, whether knowingly or not, he had made an unexampled sacrifice. On the death of stingy old Lord Bath, three years before, he had left his enormous wealth of a million and a quarter sterling to an old brother he despised, with a sort of injunction that his nephew was to have part in its ultimate disposition; and the Covent Garden arrangements had not long been completed when this brother (General Pulteney) died, leaving Colman a simple four hundred a year. His connection with Miss Ford, the actress, had been displeasing to the general; but the unpardonable offence was his having secretly turned manager of a theatre.² Miss Ford was the mother of the younger Colman, now a child, yet already

¹ Davies's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 156.

² Walpole's *Letters to Mann*, i. 366.

old enough to feel, as he remembered when he wrote his *Random Records*, the impression at this time made upon him by the poet's simple and playful manners, and by that love of children which had attended Goldsmith through life, which was noted everywhere, and made itself felt at even the small dinner-parties of pompous Hawkins. "I little thought what I should have to boast," says Miss Hawkins, describing her experiences when she used to sit upon the carpet in the drawing-room till dinner was announced, "when Goldsmith taught me to play 'Jack and Gill' by two bits of paper on his fingers."¹ This lady observed, too, a distinction between Johnson's and Garrick's way with children,² which the younger Colman partly confirms in contrasting Goldsmith's with Garrick's. The one, he tells us, played to please the boy, the other as though to please himself;³ and not even Foote, with his knowing, broad grin, his snuff-begrimed face, and his unvarying salutation of "blow your nose, child," was to him half so humorous as Goldsmith, of whose tenderness, of course, he had nothing. The poet would at any time, for amusement of the nursery, dance a mock minuet, sing a song, or play the flute; and thought little of even putting on his best wig the wrong side foremost. One of these childish reminiscences will bear relating in detail.

¹ Miss Hawkins's *Anecdotes* (1832), 7.

² "Garrick had a frown, and spoke impetuously—Johnson was slow and kind in his way to children."—Miss Hawkins's *Anecdotes*, 23. It is in an earlier part of the same book (not her *Memoirs*, which were not published till a few years later) she describes very pleasantly her childish recollection of Garrick: "I see him now, in a dark blue coat, the button-holes bound with gold, a small cocked-hat laced with gold, his waistcoat very open, and his countenance never at rest, and, indeed, seldom his person . . . sometimes sitting on a table, and then, if he saw my brothers at a distance on the lawn, shooting off like an arrow out of a bow in a spirited chase of them round the garden."—*Anecdotes*, 23.

³ "All this was very kind and condescending, but it wanted the *bonhomie* of Goldsmith, who played to please the boy, whereas Garrick always seemed playing to please himself, as he did in a theatre . . . he diverted and dazzled me, but never made me love him; and I had always this feeling for him, though I was too young to define it."—George Colman's *Random Records*, i. 117–118.

Drinking coffee one evening with Colman, at one of his first visits to Richmond, Goldsmith took little George upon his knee to amuse him; and being rewarded for his pains by a spiteful slap in the face, summary paternal punishment was inflicted by solitary confinement in an adjoining room. But here, when matters seemed desperate with the howling and screaming little prisoner, the door was unexpectedly unlocked and opened. "It was the tender-hearted Doctor himself," pursues the teller of the story, "with a lighted candle in his hand, and a smile upon his countenance, which was still partially red from the effects of my petulance. I sulked and sobbed, and he fondled and soothed, till I began to brighten. Goldsmith, who in regard to children was like the village preacher he has so beautifully described, for 'their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed,' seized the propitious moment of returning good humor; so he put down the candle and began to conjure. He placed three hats which happened to be in the room upon the carpet, and a shilling under each: the shillings, he told me, were England, France, and Spain. *Hey, presto, cockolorum!* cried the Doctor; and lo! on uncovering the shillings, which had been dispersed each beneath a separate hat, they were all found congregated under one. I was no politician at five years old, and therefore might not have wondered at the sudden revolution which brought England, France, and Spain all under one crown; but as I was also no conjurer, it amazed me beyond measure. Astonishment might have amounted to awe for one who appeared to me gifted with the power of performing miracles, if the good-nature of the man had not obviated my dread of the magician; but from that time, whenever the Doctor came to visit my father 'I pluck'd his gown to share the good man's smile,' a game of romps constantly ensued, and we were always cordial friends and merry playfellows."¹ The little hero of the incident was a child of only five years old, but we have evidence in the letters of Garrick to his father that he used at this time

¹ Colman's *Random Records*, i. 110-113.

to imitate Garrick showing Charles Dibdin how to act Lord Ogleby, and that even a full year and a half earlier he had entertained Mrs. Garrick with a whole "budget" of stories and songs, had delivered the ditty of the "Chimney Sweep" with exquisite taste as a solo, and, in the form of a duet with Garrick himself, "Old Rose and Burn the Bellows."¹ We shall be perfectly safe, therefore, in accepting it on his authority that Oliver Goldsmith in 1767 was neither more nor less than a conjurer.

¹ Letter dated 15th July, 1766, in Peake's *Memoirs of the Colman Family*, i. 186-187. And see Colman's *Posthumous Letters*, 296-297.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WEDNESDAY CLUB

1767

BUT more serious affairs than conjuring again claim Goldsmith's attention, and ours. His comedy cannot, in the most favorable expectation, appear before Christmas; and his necessities are hardly less pressing, meanwhile, than in his most destitute time. The utmost he received this year from the elder Newbery for his usual task-work would seem to have been about ten pounds for a compilation on a historical subject (the *British Empire*). The concurrent advance of another ten pounds on his promissory note, though side by side with the ominous shadow of the yet unpaid note of four years preceding, shows their friendly relations subsisting still;¹ but the present illness of the publisher, from which he never recovered, had for some months interrupted the ordinary course of his business, and its management was gradually devolving on his nephew. No less a person than Tom Davies, however, came to Goldsmith's relief.

Tom's business had thriven since he left the stage, and he determined to speculate in a history. Goldsmith's anon-

¹ Here (Newbery MSS.) is the memorandum to which I refer: "1764, Oct. 29. Dr. Goldsmith on account of *English Lives*, £8 8s. Taylor's Works, 12s. 1765, Sept. 12th, for half the copy of *Essays*, £10 10s. 1767, July 13th, for *British Empire*, £10. Promissory note, Oct. 11th, 1763, £48 1s. 6d. Ditto, July 7th, 1767, £10. [Total] £87 11s. 6d." In a subsequent memorandum of nearly the same date, the following interesting doubt occurs: "Query—Whether the money had at the Society was £4 4s." And in a separate paper, in Goldsmith's hand, I find the following: "I promise to pay to John Newbery or order ten pounds on demand for value received. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. July 7, 1767."

ymous *Letters from a Nobleman to his Son* continued to sell, and still to excite curiosity whether or not Lord Lytton had really written them. "I asked Lord L. himself," writes the learned Mrs. Carter to the less learned Mrs. Vesey,¹ "who assured me that he had never read them through, and moreover seemed to be very clearly of opinion that he did not write them. Seriously, you may deny his being the author with the fullest certainty. It seems they were writ by Lord Cork." All this sort of gossip (with no more foundation in the latter case than that Lord Cork and Orrery *had* addressed to his son a translation of Pliny's as well as other letters, and was no longer alive to contradict the rumor) was better known to Davies than to any one; and the sensible suggestion occurred to him of a *History of Rome* from the same hand, in the same easy, popular, unlearned manner. An agreement was accordingly drawn up, in which Goldsmith undertook to write such a book in two volumes, and, if possible, to complete it in two years, for the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas—an undertaking of a somewhat brighter complexion than has yet appeared in these pages; rife with future promise, it may be, in that respect; and certainly very creditable to Davies.² It is alleged by Seward and Isaac Reed that, shortly before this agreement, Goldsmith's necessities had induced him to apply for the Gresham lectureship on civil law, an office of small remuneration and smaller responsibility, which the death of a Mr. Mace had vacated and to which a Mr. Jeffries was elected; but his name does not seem to have been formally entered as a candidate, and it is more certain that shortly after the agreement with Davies he had again taken lodgings in his favorite Islington, and was busy writing there.

Goldsmith's resource, in the midst of labor as in his brief intervals of leisure, was still the country haunt, the club, and the theatre; nor should what was called his

¹ Mrs. Carter's *Letters* (February 19th, 1766), iii. 274-275.

² *Percy Memoir*, 78.

Wednesday Club, which has hitherto escaped all his biographers, fail to find commemoration here. The social dignities of Gerrard Street had not sufficed for his "clubbable" propensities. Wholly at his ease there he could not always be; and it will happen to even those who are greatest with their great friends to find themselves pleasantest with their least. The very year before Dr. Johnson died he expressed his own strong sense of this, in founding the modest club to which he invited Reynolds ("the terms are lax and the expenses light . . . we meet thrice a week, and he who misses forfeits twopence")¹ and if it were a want to Johnson to have occasional admixture of inferior intellects to be at ease with, how much more to Goldsmith! His shilling-rubber club at the "Devil" tavern, scene of that earliest of clubs for which Ben Johnson wrote his Latin rules, has been already named; and he frequented another of the same modest pretension in the parlor of the "Bedford" in Covent Garden. But what most consoled him for the surrendered haunts of his obscurer days was a minor club (known afterwards by his own name) at the "Globe" tavern in Fleet Street, where he attended every Wednesday as regularly as on the Mondays or Fridays in Gerrard Street, and seems to have "played the fool" as agreeably as when he had no reputation to be damaged by the folly. Songs sung after supper were the leading attraction at this club; and I derive my principal knowledge of it from a collection of songs and poems of the time which belonged to one of its members, a hanger-on at the theatres familiarly known by most of the actors, and to whom we owe a little book called *Mackliniana*. This worthy "William Ballantyne" had solaced his old age with manuscript notes on the amusements of his youth; and the book, so annotated, passed into the possession of my friend, Mr. Bolton Corney, who placed it at my disposal.

Whether Macklin belonged to the club appears to be

¹ Letters to Sir Joshua, dated December 4, 1783. I regret that Reynolds declined. Among the members was Cooke, so often quoted in this memoir. See *Boswell*, viii. 250.

doubtful, but among the least obscure members were King, the comedian (whose reputation Lord Ogleby had established); little Hugh Kelly, a young Irishman of eight-and-twenty, who had lately shown some variety of cleverness and superficial talent, and now occupied chambers near Goldsmith's in the Temple; Edward Thompson, whom Garrick assisted with his interest to promotion in the navy, and who is still remembered for his songs and his edition of Andrew Marvel; and another Irishman, named Glover, also a protégé of Garrick's, and mentioned on an earlier page,¹ who had been bred a doctor, figured afterwards as an actor, and now earned scanty subsistence as a sort of Grub Street Galen. The anecdotes of Goldsmith which appeared on his death in the *Annual Register* (with the signature G), and some of which reappeared in the Dublin edition (1777) of his poems by Malone, to be afterwards adopted into Evans's biographical sketch and transferred to the *Percy Memoir*, were written by this Glover, who was one of the many humble Irish clients whom Goldsmith's fame drew around him, and who profited by every scantiest gleam of his prosperity. It is he who says (and none had better cause to say it), "*Our Doctor*," as Goldsmith was now universally called, "had a constant levee of his distressed countrymen, whose wants, as far as he was able, he always relieved; and he has been often known to leave himself even without a guinea in order to supply the necessities of others."² It is to be added of Glover, however, who was notorious for his songs and imitations, that he was addicted to practical jokes, and often rewarded his patron's generosity with very impudent betrayal of his simplicity.

¹ See vol. i. 53-54 and 64. "He is a most skilful, worthy man, a good writer, and a steady friend to Government. I have known him long; he is much beloved, and the worst thing I ever heard of him was that by his skill in his profession he recovered a thief, after he had hung half an hour, and which thief, before he had healed the circle the rope had made, picked Glover's pocket by way of gratitude, and never thanked him for his good offices."—Garrick to Lord Rochford, recommending Glover for a Surgeoncy in the Essex Militia.

² Preface to the *Poems* (Ed. 1777), vi.

It was he who, in one of their summer rambles over Hampstead, took Goldsmith into a cottage at West End, through the open window of which they saw a little party assembled at tea of whom in reality he knew nothing though he undertook to introduce his friend, and who actually, to the poet's awkward horror and mal-address when he saw the trick, imposed himself on the party assembled as a pretended old acquaintance, on the host as known to the guests and on the guests as familiar with the host, and coolly sat down to tea with them.

Hugh Kelly seems to have been a greater favorite than Glover with good Mr. Ballantyne. "Much," says one of his notes, "as I esteemed Mr. Kelly, when a member of the Wednesday Club at the 'Globe' in Fleet Street, called Goldsmith's, who was seldom absent—I respected him because he was always unassuming—*this*" (the note is appended to a poem of Kelly's called *Meditation*), "had I then known him to be the author of it, would have made me adore him." The poem, nevertheless, is poor enough; and, though Kelly was certainly popular with his nearer friends and had many kindly qualities, his unassumingness may be doubted. He had lately emerged to notoriety, out of a desperate and obscure struggle, by somewhat questionable arts. His youth had been passed in Dublin as a staymaker's apprentice, and making sudden flight from this congenial employment, he was obliged to resume it in London to save himself from starvation; but he succeeded afterwards in hiring himself as writer to an attorney, from this got promotion to Grub Street, and had labored meanly, up to the present year, in hack-work for the magazines and newspapers (Newbery having given him employment on the *Public Ledger*), when it occurred to him to make profit of Churchill's example and set up as a satirist and censor of the stage. This he did after the usual fashion of an imitator, and in his *Thespis* caricatured the *Rosciad*. Poor Mrs. Dancer he called a "moon-eyed idiot"; talked of "Clive's weak head and execrable heart"; libelled such men as Woodward and Moody; and lavished all his praise on the

Hursts, Ackmans, and Bransbys.¹ Yet though the manifest source of such inspiration was a well-known public-house within a few doors of Drury Lane theatre, where the fettered lions of the stage were always growling against their tamers, we find that "the talents for satire displayed in this work by Mr. Kelly recommended him at once to the notice of Mr. Garrick." What resulted from that notice will soon, with somewhat higher pretensions, reintroduce the object of it; and meanwhile he may be left with Mr. Ballantyne's praise, and with the remark, to counterbalance it, of Johnson, who made answer to Kelly's request for permission to converse with him, "Sir, I never desire to converse with a man who has written more than he has read."²

Of the obscurer members of the Wednesday, or "Globe," Club our mention may be limited to a Mr. Gordon, who is remembered by Mr. Ballantyne in connection with the jovial and jocund song of "Nottingham Ale." "Mr. Gordon," he says, "the largest man I ever kept company with, usually sang this song at the 'Globe' club; and it always very much pleased Dr. Goldsmith, Dr. Glover, good Tom King, the comedian, and myself, William Ballantyne." Nor was the evening's amusement limited to songs, but had the variety of dramatic imitations, with occasional original epigram; and here was first heard that celebrated epitaph on Edward Purdon which showed that Goldsmith had lately been reading Pope's and Swift's *Miscellanies*:³

¹ See Davies's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 140; and Taylor's *Records*, i. 95-102.

² It is also said that on Kelly's first introduction to Johnson, after having sat a short time, he got up to take his leave with the remark that he feared a longer visit might be troublesome, whereto Johnson replied: "Not in the least, sir; I had forgotten that you were in the room."—*Boswell*, viii. 411. Yet Mr. John Nichols, after describing Kelly to Boswell as a person "in whom vanity was somewhat too predominant," added that Johnson "had a real friendship for him."

³ The original of all is the epitaph on "*La Mort du Sieur Étienne* :

Il est au bout de ses travaux
Il a passé le Sieur Étienne;
En ce monde il eut tant des maux
Qu'on ne croit pas qu'il revienne."

With this, perhaps, Goldsmith was familiar, and had, therefore, less scruple

"Here lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,
Who long was a bookseller's hack;
He led such a damnable life in this world,
I don't think he'll wish to come back."

It was in the April of the present year that Purdon fitly closed his luckless life by suddenly dropping down dead in Smithfield; and as it was chiefly Goldsmith's pittance that had saved him thus long from starvation, it was well that the same friend should give him his solitary chance of escape from oblivion. "Dr. Goldsmith made this epitaph," says William Ballantyne, "on his way from his chambers in the Temple to the Wednesday evening's club at the 'Globe.' *I think he will never come back*, I believe he said. I was sitting by him, and he repeated it more than twice. *I think he will never come back.*" Ah! and not altogether as a jest, it may be, the second and the third time. It is not without a certain pathos to me that he should so have repeated it. There was something in Purdon's fate, from their first meeting in college to that incident in Smithfield, which bore no very violent contrast to his own; and remembering what Glover has said of Oliver's frequent sudden descents from mirth to melancholy, some such fitful change of temper would here have been natural enough. "His disappointments at these times," Glover tells us, "made him peevish and sullen; and he has often left a party of convivial friends abruptly in the evening, in order to go home and brood over his misfortunes."¹ But a better medicine for his grief than brooding over it was a sudden start into the country to forget it; and it was probably with a feeling of this kind he had in the summer revisited Islington, to which, after this Wednesday Club digression, we must now for a very brief space accompany him.

in laying felonious hands on the epigram in the *Miscellanies* (*Swift*, xii. 372):

"Well, then, poor G—— lies underground!
So there's an end of honest Jack.
So little justice here he found,
'Tis ten to one he'll ne'er come back."

¹ *Annual Register*, xvii. 31. *Life* prefixed to Malone's edition (1777), ix.

He had one room in the turret of Canonbury House, which, since altered and subdivided, to within the last twenty years remained as it was in his time—a genuine relic of Elizabeth's hunting-seat. It was an old oak-room on the first floor, with Gothic windows, panelled wainscot, and a recess in its eastern corner for a large press-bedstead, which doubtless the poet occupied.¹ Canonbury Tower, with which Newbery had some connection as holding a lease or property in it (of which he gave the management to the Flemings), was for many years let out in this way, and had been the frequent resort of men connected with literature: but if, as at times alleged, any of Goldsmith's poetry was written here, it was written in the present autumn, and could have been but the fragments or beginnings of a poem; for he did not return to the lodging. He now remained some weeks in it; and is said to have been often found, during the time, among a social party of his fellow-lodgers (publishers Robinson and Francis Newbery, printers Baker and Hamilton, editor Beaufort, afterwards of the *Town and Country Magazine*, poets Woty and Huddleston Wynne, and pamphleteering parsons Rider and Sellon), presiding at the festive board of the "Crown" tavern, in the Islington lower road, where they had formed a kind of temporary club. At the close of the year he had returned to the Temple, was in communication with Burke about his comedy, and was again pretty constant in his attendance at Gerrard Street.

¹ Mr. Hone, in his *Every Day Book*, says, on the authority of Mr. Symes, bailiff of the manor of Islington, "that his mother-in-law, Mrs. Evans, who had lived there three-and-thirty years, and was wife to the former bailiff, often told him that her aunt, Mrs. Tapps, a seventy years' inhabitant of the tower, was accustomed to talk much about Goldsmith and his apartment. It was the old oak-room on the first floor. Mrs. Tapps affirmed that he there wrote his *Deserted Village*, and that he slept in a large press-bedstead placed in the eastern corner. From this room two small ones for sleeping in have since been separated, by the removal of the panelled oak wainscoting from the northeast wall, and the cutting of two doors through it, with a partition between them; and since Goldsmith was here, the window on the south side has been broken through."—The *Every Day Book* for 8th May, 1825 (i. 638). The passage in the text was written in 1848.

CHAPTER XVIII

PATRONS OF LITERATURE

1767

ON his reappearance in London, Goldsmith found political excitement raging and Burke still rising higher through the storm. He might have wondered to see, among the first acts of the new administration, his countryman and friend Robert Nugent, the most furious upholder of colonial taxation, selected for a lordship of the Board of Trade, and raised to the rank of Baron Nugent and Viscount Clare; yet this was nothing to the marvel of seeing emanate, from Lord Chatham's Chancellor of the Exchequer, a new project for taxation of America. The rest of their career had been only less disgraceful; nor is it possible, without some allusion to it, to exhibit properly either the social influences of the time or that incident of Goldsmith's life with which this chapter will close. Violating public faith in their attack on the East India charter, they had sustained, from its resolute exposure by Mr. *O'Bourke* (as pompous Beckford, Lord Chatham's tool in the matter, persisted in calling Edmund), a most damaging blow. They had suffered an ignominious defeat, without precedent since Walpole's fall, on the question of continuing the land tax at four shillings, which Dowdeswell succeeded in reducing to three, backed by all the country gentlemen, by the Bedfords and the Grenvilles, by the single partisan or so who still followed Newcastle, and by all the Rockinghams except Burke, who alone ("not having our number of acres," said the top-booted gentlemen to each other) fell from his party on that question, and would not vote to lighten

the land. They had tasted as bitter humiliation in the later rejection of their overtures for help by the despised head of the last administration, who, manfully acting on Burke's warnings and suggestions, maintained, in the meeting with the Bedfords at Newcastle House, that the power of Lord Bute was still to be resisted; resolutely refused to sanction any arrangement which would again expose America to the mercies of George Grenville; and finally rejected the party combination which the old Duke of Newcastle, to get himself once more into office, had ever since he left office been laboring to effect "tooth and nail" (that is, says Horace Walpole, "with the one of each sort that he has left, the old wretch!"). And when, during the earlier progress of these confusions and disgraces, Chatham sullenly disappeared from the scene and withdrew the last restraint from his ill-assorted colleagues, George Grenville, seeing his opportunity, had taunted the fiery Townshend to open rebellion. An agent from Connecticut,¹ Jared Ingersoll, was present in the house (the reader will remember that these were not the days of reporters), and has described what passed. Grenville stopped suddenly in the midst of a powerful speech on the existing financial depression, and, turning to the Treasury bench, exclaimed: "You are cowards; you are afraid of the Americans. You dare not tax America." "Fear!" cried Townshend, from his seat, "fear! cowards! dare not tax America? *I* dare tax America!" For a moment Grenville stood silent; but immediately added: "Dare you tax America? I wish to God I could see it"; to which Townshend impetuously retorted, "I will, I will." The King's friends helped Grenville to keep the boaster to his pledge, and he redeemed it. But though he passed his Colonial Importation Duties bill as easily as a turnpike act, the ill-

¹ Since this biography first appeared Mr. Bancroft has depicted in a lively way (in the second volume of his *History of the American Revolution*, 274-275) the effect which Ingersoll's reports of what was then passing in the English House of Commons produced throughout the towns and villages of Connecticut.

fated ministry knew no more peace. Conway began to languish for the army, Grafton looked wistfully to Newmarket, Shelburne made no secret of his discontent; and the scenes that followed inflicted shame on all. Each, in his separate fashion, appealed against Townshend to Chatham, without, in any case, the courtesy of an answer. Townshend, with mimicry transcending Foote's, and wit that only Garrick "writing and acting extempore scenes of Congreve" was thought able to have equalled, rose from the seat still shared by his colleagues with himself, to burlesque them, to jeer at them, and, amid murmurs of wonder, admiration, applause, pity, and laughter, to assail even Chatham himself. Burke, strong with a power that could inform even ridicule with passion, rose from where he also still sat, behind the occupants of the Treasury bench, to single out each for humiliating contrast with Chatham's silence and scorn; put up mock invocations to that absent, silent, sullen chief of theirs, as a being before whom thrones, dominations, prince-doms, virtues, powers (and here, at each lofty phrase, amid shouts of laughter, he waved his hand over the ministers), all veiled their faces with their wings; and then, as in despair of reaching by argument a being so remote, passed into a prayer to this "Great Minister above, that rules and governs over all," to have mercy upon them and not destroy the work of his own hands. Augustus Harvey, to the regret of many, called him to order.¹ "I have often suffered," cried Burke, as he sat down, "under persecutions of order, but I did not expect its lash while at my prayers. I venerate the great man, and speak of him accordingly." Still the great man kept silence. He had the gout, and would not leave Bath; he left Bath, and shut himself up in an inn at Marlborough; he left Marlborough, and came to London. But nothing would induce him to see his colleagues; not even the personal entreaties of the King. Would he, then, see himself, his Majesty

¹ From a letter of Sir Matthew Featherstonehaugh, member for Portsmouth, to Lord Clive. See *Chatham Correspondence*, iii. 145-146; and Walpole's *George III.*, ii. 407.

deigned to ask? He pleaded gout (it seems to have been suppressed gout, a worse affliction, from which he was suffering),¹ and retreated to North End. But in a few days, having been seen by Lord Chesterfield riding about Hampstead Heath, again the King wrote, "If you cannot come to me to-morrow I am ready to call at North End"; and again, under cover of profuse submission, evasion did the work of refusal. By this time, in short, though laboring still with the bodily weakness which induced his first false step, Chatham seems to have discovered the drift of the King, and what it really was that was meant to have been effected under cover of his own great name. Lord Charlemont, describing the state of things to Flood ("Charles Townshend at open war, Conway angry, Lord Shelburne out of humor, the Duke of Grafton by no means pleased, and Lord Bute's friends at length positively declaring themselves"), implies little further concealment of the palace plot; one of Chatham's first remarks on his subsequent reappearance in public, to the effect that "the late good King had something about him by which it was possible to know whether he liked you or disliked you," was pointedly levelled at the good King's grandson; and there can hardly be a doubt but that his Majesty was now only fencing to obtain time, had already resolved upon a fresh arrangement of the offices, and, even from the moment of the new America-taxation scheme, had turned with decisive favor to Charles Townshend himself. The failure of the cry for help

¹ Hume describes his state exactly, points out the cause, and indicates the remedy. He writes (in a letter which has escaped the historians) to the Countess de Boufflers (*Private Correspondence*, 243-244): "The public here, as well as with you, believe him wholly mad; but I am assured it is not so. He is only fallen into extreme low spirits and into nervous disorders, which render him totally unfit for business, make him shun all company, and, as I am told, set him weeping like a child upon the least accident. Is not this a melancholy situation for so lofty and vehement a spirit as his? And is it not even an addition to his unhappiness that he retains his senses? It was a rash experiment, that of repelling the gout, which threw him into this state of mind; and perhaps a hearty fit of it may again prove a cure to him." The philosopher's prediction was verified.

to the Rockinghams, however, so well kept together by Burke (whose lately published *Correspondence* explains many things before obscure), had been accompanied by a failure as decisive in respect to the Bedfords, whom the resolute Rigby held together, before significant honors began to gather round Townshend. His brother, Lord Townshend, was made lord-lieutenant of Ireland ("I am told," writes Hume to Sir Gilbert Elliot, "Lord Townshend openly ascribes his promotion entirely to Lord Bute"); his wife was dignified with a peerage, as Pitt's had heretofore been, and the common talk had fixed upon himself for First Minister, when suddenly, on the 4th of September, 1767, being then only forty-two, he died of a neglected fever. In the changes consequent on his death, the compact confederacy of Bedfords, leaving George Grenville in the lurch, marched boldly into office; and the manœuvrings and intrigues so long in progress, to the disgrace of every one concerned, received their shameless consummation in what was called the Grafton Ministry.

It was a triumph for royalty, in spite of the Bedfords. "In a great meeting lately," writes Hume to Sir Gilbert Elliot, "Lord Bute's health was proposed in a bumper. It will be a surprise to you certainly if that noble lord should again come into fashion, and openly avow his share of influence, and be openly courted by all the world!" Chatham had once more retired to Bath, and was in no respect consulted. Conway was to hold office till the beginning of the following year, and then make way for the Bedford nominee, Lord Weymouth; Lord Sandwich and his old friend Dashwood, now Lord Le Despencer, were to be joint Postmasters-General, Rigby to be Paymaster, and Lord Gower President of the Council, while, with these men, so long as the name of Chatham could be kept to conjure with, Camden was to continue to be associated as Chancellor and Shelburne as Secretary of State. Such ill-omened arrangements, which every other man with a sense of public decency execrated, were precisely what the King desired; and when the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was accepted by

Lord North, and Mr. Charles Jenkinson (many years later created Lord Liverpool) was made a Lord of the Treasury, the royal satisfaction may be supposed to have been complete.

North was the son of the Princess dowager's intimate friend, Lord Guildford; and scandal had not hesitated to find a reason for the extraordinary resemblance he presented to the King, in his clumsy figure, homely face, thick lips, light complexion and hair, bushy eyebrows, and protruding large gray eyes, which, as Walpole says, rolled about to no purpose, for he was utterly short-sighted.¹ But he was an abler man than the King, and had too many good as well as amiable qualities for the service in which he now consented to enlist them. He was a man of wit and very various knowledge; underneath his heavy exterior, singularly awkward manners,² and what seemed to be a perpetual tendency to fall asleep, he concealed great promptness of parts, and an aptitude for business not a little extraordinary; while the personal disinterestedness of his character and the unalterable sweetness of his temper carried him undoubtedly through more public faults and miscarriages, with less of private hatred or dislike, than fell to any minister's lot before or since his time. If he helped to ruin his country, he did it with the most perfect good-humor; and was always ready to surrender the profit as well as the credit of it to "the King's private junto."

Of that private junto Charles Jenkinson was the most active member. He had belonged to every ministry of the reign, except Lord Rockingham's. Now a year older than

¹ Lord Mahon remarks upon this defect of sight in Lord North as "a great obstacle in the way of Parliamentary eminence, which has never perhaps been wholly overcome, except by himself, and in our own time by Lord Derby."—*History*, v. 254.

² "The noble lord who spoke last," says Burke, not many days before North obtained the highest place in the government, "after extending his right leg a full yard before his left, rolling his flaming eyes, and moving his ponderous frame, has at length opened his mouth!"—*Parliamentary History*, xvi. 720. Imagine a leading orator venturing on such a sally in our present House of Commons!

Goldsmith, he had started his public career as Goldsmith did, by writing in the *Monthly Review*; but, tiring of the patronage of a bookseller, and discovering that Whiggery was not the way to court, he wheeled suddenly round to Toryism, offered his services to Lord Bute, and became the favorite's private secretary. Men grievously belied him, if he was not thenceforward the secret fetcher and carrier between Bute, the Princess, the House of Commons, and the King; nor did they scruple to say that, by the lines of prudent caution in his face, by his stealthy, inscrutable, down-looking eyes (people who had read *Gil Blas* would call him pious Signor Ordonnez), by the twinkling dark-lantern motion of his half-closed eyelids while he spoke, and by the absence of everything that savored of imagination in him,¹ nature had seemed to mark him out for precisely such service. His principles were simply what I have stated those of the junto to be; and were now most pithily expressed by Lord Barrington, the existing Secretary of War, who, while Lord North yet hesitated on the brink of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, had eagerly volunteered to take the office. "The King has long known," said the worthy Secretary, "that I am entirely devoted to him; having no political connection with any man, being determined never to form one, and conceiving that in this age the country and its constitution are best served by an unbiased attachment to the crown." Amen, amen! The Monarch is great and we are his Prophets, cried Mr. Jenkinson and his followers.

And this was the close. To establish such a system as this had cost the many public scandals of the last seven years; the disgraces of eminent men, the disruptions of useful friendships, the violations of private as of public honor. For this the country had been deluged with libels; and men

¹ See Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs*, ii. 209-210. The story is preserved of his having said, in answer to some one who had called him "that evil genius who lurks behind the throne," "Mr. Speaker, I am *not* an evil genius; I am not lurking behind the throne. I again repeat I am not an evil genius, but the member for Rye *in every respect whatsoever*" (this last a familiar phrase of his).—Moore's *Diary*, iv. 39.

of station had put forth against their quondam associates, lampoons unapproachable in scurrile violence by the lowest gazetteers of Grub Street or the Fleet. Nor was that part of the mischief to end with the mischief it helped to create. The poisoned chalice was to have its ingredients commended to other lips; and already had significant indication been given that the lesson of libellous instruction would be taught to a wider school. One of Lord Sandwich's hired and paid libellers, parson Scott, had by the pungent slang of his letters (signed "Anti-Sejanus") raised the sale of the *Public Advertiser* from fifteen hundred to three thousand a day; but letters of higher as well as more piquant strain had succeeded his in that respectable journal, and seemed to threaten no quiet possession to the power so lately seized. This new writer had as yet taken no settled signature, nor were his compositions so finished or powerful as those which made memorable the signature he took some twelve months later; but there was something in his writing, even now, which marked it out from the class it belonged to. There was a strong individual grasp of the matters on which he wrote, a familiar scorn of the men he talked about, and a special hatred of the junto of King's-friends. His fervent abuse of the statesmen, such as Chatham, whom he afterwards exalted, has not been sufficiently referred to their existing relations with that faction which he hated with a private as well as public hatred, and which also at this time as bitterly arrayed against Chatham the brothers-in-law with whom he afterwards so cordially acted. It was as clear, from the first three letters of this writer, that he knew the "atoms" and their "original creating cause," and that in the thick of "its own webs" he had seen "the venomous spider," as it seems to me now to be proved, if the strongest circumstantial as well as internal evidence can be held to prove anything, that he was throughout all his correspondence employed in the War Office, under that model King's-friend, Lord Barrington himself.¹ But

¹ Since this remark was made in my first edition the discussion as to the

be this as it might, his letters, variously and oddly signed, had thus early excited attention; and would sufficiently, with other indications, have foretold the coming storm, even if the arch-priest of mischief had not suddenly himself arrived. Coolly, as if no outlawry existed, Wilkes crossed over to London; and his first careless business was to send an exquisite French letter to Garrick addressed as to Master Kitley, to ask him how he felt since his reconciliation with his wife. But none knew better than his quondam friend Sandwich what other business he was likely to have in hand. Though he had declined during the summer a "genteel letter" from Paoli, offering him a regiment in Corsica to advance the cause of liberty, he had put himself in motion at the first reasonable prospect of another campaign for liberty (and Wilkes) at home. No one could doubt that the struggle would be a sharp one, and the first care of ministers was directed to the press.

Excellent reasons existed therefore, as I have thus attempted to explain, for the great stress and storm which was now making itself felt in Downing Street. A necessity

authorship of "Junius" has been reopened, chiefly by an able writer in the *Athenæum*, who has given great study to the subject, and in illustrating it has thrown much valuable light on the political and personal history of the time. Lord Mahon has treated it at some length in his *History*, and other writers have largely engaged in it. This is, of course, no place for such an argument, but the belief that Francis was the man is so strongly stated in the course of my narrative that I am in a manner bound to say whether or not, after all the recent discussion, it remains unaltered. While I admit that such is the fact, I may add that I have not the same belief which I had formerly in the authenticity of all the letters with the various signatures ascribed to "Junius" to be found in Woodfall's edition. 1852. Since this note was written Mr. Herman Merivale has made an important contribution to the literature of "Junius" by editing and completing the late Mr. Joseph Parkes's collections for a *Life of Sir Philip Francis*. Mr. Merivale's share in this book, indeed, goes far to settle whatever of the question remained undetermined; and much interest belongs independently to the impression formed from a thorough examination of Sir Philip's letters by so acute and practised an intellect. I have warmly to thank Mr. Merivale for permitting me to publish at the close of this chapter a memorandum upon the Francis Papers, drawn up at my request.—*Post*, p. 74. See also, *post*, book iv. chapters iv. and xi.

had unexpectedly appeared for better writers than the ordinary party hacks; the new and formidable pen in the *Public Advertiser* was piercing the sides of ministers from week to week; and the question naturally occurred to those ingenious gentlemen whether they might not, after all, become patrons of literature very serviceably to themselves. And hence it is that I am to introduce no less a person than a minister of the church, and chaplain to a minister of state, on a visit to the Temple to pay his respects to Goldsmith on his return from Canonbury Tower.

Parson Scott, Sandwich's chaplain, was now busily going about to negotiate for writers; and a great many years afterwards, when he was a rich old doctor of divinity, related an anecdote which was to illustrate the folly of men who are ignorant of the world, and the particular and egregious folly of the author of the *Traveller*. He describes himself applying to Goldsmith, among others, to induce him to write in favor of the administration. "I found him," he said, "in a miserable set of chambers in the Temple. I told him my authority; I told him that I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions; and, would you believe it! he was so absurd as to say, 'I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party; the assistance you offer is, therefore, unnecessary to me.' And so I left him," added the Rev. Dr. Scott, indignantly, "in his garret."¹

¹ The late Mr. Basil Montagu heard this statement from Dr. Scott himself. "A few months before the death of Dr. Scott, author of *Anti-Sejanus* and other political tracts in support of Lord North's administration, I happened to dine with him in company with my friend Sir George Tuthill, who was the Doctor's physician. After dinner Dr. Scott mentioned, as matter of astonishment and a proof of the folly of men who are, according to common opinion, ignorant of the world, that he was once sent with a *carte blanche* from the ministry to Oliver Goldsmith to induce him to write in favor of the administration," etc. That the ministers at this time made such the condition of any favor granted by them to literary men I could give many proofs. Poor Hugh Kelly will hereafter be seen to lose what little popularity he had acquired with audiences at the theatre because he had so to work for a ministerial pittance; and even Johnson himself complained to Gerard Hamilton that "his pension having been given to him as

An impatience very natural to the holy man (who within four years had his reward in two fat crown livings), as a like emotion had been to Hawkins, the respectable Middlesex magistrate; but, on the other hand, a patience very natural to Goldsmith and well worthy of remembrance. He knew, if ever man did, the chances he embraced in rejecting that offer. It is an easy transition from what the ministry were willing to do, if they could get return in kind, to what, in the opposite case, they found it impossible to do. Poor Smollett had lately returned from foreign travel with shattered health and spirits, which he had vainly attempted to recruit in his native Scottish air; and, feeling that a milder climate was his only hope, was now preparing again to go abroad for probably the last time, with hardly a hope of recovery and very scanty means of support. He stated his case to Hume, and Hume went to Lord Shelburne. The matter was very simple. The consulships of Leghorn and of Nice were both vacant at this very time; and, could either be obtained for Smollett, there might yet be hope for his broken health, or for quiet and repose till death should come. But this could not be. Just as when Gray, having solicited from Lord Bute the office to which he had so righteous a claim, found it promised to the tutor of Sir James Lowther, so, as to Hume's petition, Nice had "long been pre-engaged" by Lord Shelburne to the Spanish ambassador, Leghorn was under similar pledge to a friend of lawyer Dunning's, and there was no possibility of help for the author of *Peregrine Pickle*.¹ In that state he was left till the following summer, when, with the prospect now certain which earlier he had hoped might be averted, he wrote to bid Hume farewell before departing to "perpetual exile";²

a literary character, he had been applied to by the administration to write political pamphlets; and he was even so much irritated that he declared his resolution to resign his pension. His friend showed him the impropriety of such a measure, and he afterwards expressed his gratitude, and said he had received good advice."—*Boswell*, v. 255.

¹ See letter in Burton's *Hume*, ii. 406.

² "With respect to myself," he writes, "I am sorry I cannot have the pleasure of taking leave of you in person, before I go into perpetual exile.

and Hume could only grieve and say to his brother man of letters that "the indifference of ministers towards literature, which has been long, and indeed always, the case in England, gives little prospect of any alteration in this particular."¹ There was nothing for it but that this writer of genius, worn out in the service of booksellers, to whom his labors had been largely profitable; of the public, whose hours of leisure or of pain he had lightened; and of patrons, who at his utmost need deserted him; should pass abroad to labor and to die. One year longer he stayed in England; published and proclaimed, in his last political romance, the universal falsehood of faction, his own remorse for having helped to sustain it, his farewell to the "rascally age," and the contempt for the Chathams as well as Butes it had forever inspired him with; and in another year, having meanwhile written *Humphrey Clinker*, was buried in the churchyard at Leghorn.

NOTE BY HERMAN MERIVALE, ESQ., ON THE PAPERS OF SIR PHILIP FRANCIS IN CONNECTION WITH THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE LETTERS OF JUNIUS. (*Ante*, 71.)

I REGARD the authorship of Junius, by Francis, as proved to reasonable satisfaction by the arguments which long ago seemed conclusive to most of our literary men of eminence who have carefully examined the subject. I will proceed to say in what respects I think that the Francis papers, as studied and communicated to the public by the late Mr. Parkes and myself, corroborate the previously known proofs:

1. It is to my mind a singularly significant fact that, in all this mass of papers (Francis having been a very voluminous diarist, correspondent, and

I sincerely wish you all health and happiness. In whatever part of the earth it may be my fate to reside, I shall always remember with pleasure, and recapitulate with pride, the friendly intercourse I have maintained with one of the best men, and undoubtedly the best writer of the age.

'Nos patriam fugimus: tu Tityre, lentus in umbra,
Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas.'

—Smollett to Hume, 31st of August, 1768. *Burton's Life*, ii. 419.

¹ *Burton's Hume*, ii. 420. There are some interesting notices of Smollett (to one of them I have referred in a previous page) scattered through the *Autobiography* of Carlyle, who had the honor to be introduced by name in *Humphrey Clinker*.

memorandum-writer, and having been conversant with the subjects and familiar with the personages treated of in Junius), not a passage was discovered inconsistent on the face of it with the supposition that Francis was Junius, or raising the supposition that any other person was so.

2. The papers showed very numerous instances in which it was plain that Francis had the same subjects of interest in his mind which were treated at the same time in corresponding passages of Junius.

3. They showed, moreover, that the personal movements of Francis during the Junius period corresponded with singular accuracy with those of Junius; that when Francis was ill, Junius flagged; that when Francis left town (which he rarely did), there was a delay in the issue of Junius, sometimes such as to call forth the remarks of his opponents in the press. And (to resume the negative line of evidence) they showed no case in which Francis *could* not (physically) have written any letter of Junius; and no case in which he could not have had the opportunity of knowing the facts which Junius alleged.

4. They strongly corroborated what was known before of the early connection of Francis with Chatham, his dependence on Chatham as his chief through Calcraft, his ambitious expectations of obtaining power through Chatham, and his consequent devotion of all his energies—as long as there was a chance—to the object of setting Chatham up again; to which object Junius was equally devoted.

5. They also confirm Macaulay's admirable divination respecting the similarity of character between Junius and Francis, although he knew so much less of Francis than we now do; his rancor, his ingratitude, his immense self-opinion, his secretiveness, and yet, with all this, a residue of strong public spirit and honorable feeling.

6. This parallel comes out in remarkable coincidences, which cannot be developed except at length. Take one of the most striking. Junius uses very scurrilous language about Calcraft. It has been very plausibly argued that Junius, therefore, could not have been Francis, inasmuch as Calcraft was Francis's patron and benefactor. True; but Francis uses precisely similar language about Calcraft in one of his own most private memoranda, never disclosed till after his death.

7. Francis's demeanor about his "secret" I do not profess to explain, nor in truth does it seem to me of much consequence in this matter. For whoever wrote Junius must have been equally reticent and mysterious. But thus much occurs to me. Francis was cautiously silent on the subject for many years; carefully mutilating his own most private papers in passages likely, if discovered, to afford a clue. The main reason for this—independent of the general dislike that a man would have to be known as Junius—I believe to have been his position with Lord Barrington. Him he had insulted more grievously than any one else. But they remained friends, and continued so while Francis was in India, and for years after Francis's return. Francis visited at his house, and so forth. While Lord Barrington was alive Francis could not have avowed himself Junius without utter damnation. But Lord Barrington lived till after 1790, when Francis was

becoming an old man. *After* that event suspicions begin to grow ; but not until the appearance of Taylor's first pamphlet, in 1812, do they become serious. Then the vanity of Francis gets the better of him, and though he does not own to Junius, he evidently enjoys the imputation.

8. Was Francis author of the great number of "miscellaneous" letters included in the Woodfall collection, and of the far more numerous letters and newspaper articles which Parkes attributes to him ? I cannot say my mind is made up on this. All I can say is, his industry was very great indeed, his habit of composition so inveterate, that he really could not help writing long minutes and papers for his own amusement when he could no longer send them to the press ; and though the merits of these newspaper productions are very various, yet there are few which in themselves seem to me to betray difference of hand. The difficulty is, if he had associates of any consequence, to say who they could have been, considering the habitual secrecy of his operations. Rosenhagen, possibly, was one.

9. Did any one know that he was writing Junius ? If any one, probably three: Calcraft (who died 1772), Doyly (who was, if so, a confederate), and H. S. Woodfall (who had strong professional cause for silence). But, although I think there are probabilities in favor of the supposition, I am by no means convinced of it.

10. As to style, certainly the superiority of that of Junius to anything I knew of Francis was with me, for a long time, the ground of a lingering doubt of their identity. And though now convinced of this, I still regard it as a singular circumstance. But I think Francis's papers, as published in my volumes, do raise him nearer to a level with the *best* Junius than anything known of him before, and quite to a level with the inferior portions of Junius ; and I think that, on similar grounds of alleged inequality in productions from the same hand, as good a case might be made to show that Butler did not write *Hudibras* nor Bunyan the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

H. M.

CHAPTER XIX

CLOSE OF A TWELVE YEARS' STRUGGLE

1767

SUCH a possible fate as that of poor Smollett, common in all times in England and at this time nearly universal, was something to reflect upon in those Garden Court chambers, which Mr. Scott, swelling with his brace of livings, can only deign to call a "a garret." A poor enough abode they were, scarcely perhaps deserving a less contemptuous name; and here Goldsmith found himself, after twelve years of hard struggle, doubtless unable at all times to repress, what is so often the unavailing bitterness of the successful as well as unsuccessful man, the consideration of what he had done compared with what he might have done.¹ The chances still remain, nevertheless, that he might not have done it; and the greater probability is that most people do what they are qualified to do in the condition of existence imposed upon them. It is very doubtful to me, upon the whole, if Goldsmith, placed as he was throughout life, could have done better than he did. Beginning with not even the choice which Fielding admits was his, of hackney-writer or hackney-coachman, he has fought his way at last to consideration and esteem. But he bears upon him the scars of his twelve years' conflict, of the mean sorrows through which he has passed, and of the cheap indulgences he has sought relief and help from. There is nothing plastic in his

¹ "He observed," says Dr. Maxwell, in the most interesting collectanea of Johnson's sayings contributed to *Boswell* (iii. 145), "it was a most mortifying reflection for any man to consider *what he had done* compared with *what he might have done*."

nature now. He is forty. His manners and habits are completely formed; and in them any further success can make little favorable change, whatever it may effect for his mind or his genius. The distrusts which were taught him in his darkest humiliations cling around him still; and, by the fitful changes and sudden necessities which have encouraged the weakness of his natural disposition, his really generous and most affectionate nature will still continue to be obscured. It was made matter of surprise and objection against him that though his poems are replete with fine moral sentiments and bespeak a great dignity of mind, yet he had no sense of the shame nor dread of the evils of poverty.¹ How should he? and to what good end? Would it have been wisely done to engage in a useless conflict, to contest with what too plainly was his destiny, and gnaw the file forever? It is true that poverty brings along with it many disreputable compliances, disingenuous shifts and resources, most dire and sordid necessities—much that, even while it helps to vindicate personal independence, may not be consistent with perfect self-respect. It is not a soil propitious to virtue and straightforwardness, often as they hardily grow there; and it is well that it should be escaped from as soon as may be.² But there are worse evils. There is a worse subjection to poverty than the mere ceasing to regard it with dread or with shame. There is that submission to it which is implied in a servile adulation of wealth, to the exclusion of every sense of disgrace but that of being poor; and there is, on the other hand, a familiarity with

¹ Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, 420.

² There is nothing more impressive in Johnson than the way in which he always speaks of poverty. "Poverty, my dear friend, is so great an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation and so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it."—To Boswell, March 28, 1782. "Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided."—To Boswell, June 3, 1782. "Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness; it certainly destroys liberty; and it makes some virtues impracticable and others extremely difficult."—To Boswell, December 7, 1782.

it, a careless but not unmanly relation with its wants and shames, which, rightly used, may leave infinite enduring pleasure for its every transitory pain. Where is to be found, for example, such an intimate knowledge of the poor, such ready and hearty sympathy with their joys and sorrows, such a strong social sentiment with what the kindest observers too little heed, such zeal for all that can impart

An hour's importance to the poor man's heart,

as in Goldsmith's writings? It is the real dignity of mind which only poverty can teach so well; and when his friends admired it in his books, they might have questioned the value of their accompanying regret.¹ Genius often effects its highest gains in a balance of what the world counts for disadvantage and loss; and it has fairly been made matter of doubt if Pope's body had been less crooked whether his verses would have been so straight. In every man, wealthy or poor in fortune or in genius, we see the result of the many various circumstances which have made him what he is; wisdom finds its aptest exercise in a charitable consideration of all those circumstances; and, so far as any such result is discovered to have profited and pleased mankind, they will not be unwise to accept it in compensation for whatever pain or disadvantage may have happened to attend it.

The last section of Goldsmith's life and adventures is now arrived at; and in what remains to be described there will

¹ Let me quote from letter cxix. in the *Citizen of the World*. "The misfortunes of the great, my friend, are held up to engage our attention, are enlarged upon in tones of declamation, and the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers: they have at once the comfort of admiration and pity. . . . The miseries of the poor are, however, entirely disregarded, though some undergo more real hardships in one day than the great in their whole lives. It is, indeed, inconceivable what difficulties the meanest English sailor or soldier endures without murmuring or regret. Every day is to him a day of misery, and yet he bears his hard fate without repining!" I could multiply such passages infinitely from Goldsmith's writings. With his ever genial and humorous delight in the little humble gayeties and thrifty enjoyments of the poor all his readers are familiar.

appear more strange inconsistencies than have yet been noted. The contrast which every man might be made more or less to illustrate, of circumstances and pretensions, of ignorance and knowledge, of accomplishments and blunders, will, for the few years to come, take more decisive shape and greater prominence in Goldsmith. He will be more seen in a society for which his habits have least adapted him, and where the power to make mirth of his foibles was held to be but fair consolation for the inability to make denial of his genius. "Magnanimous Goldsmith, a gooseberry fool!"¹ His reputation had been silently widening, in the midst and in despite of his humbler drudgery; his poem, his novel, his essays, had imperceptibly but steadily enlarged the circle of his admirers; and he was somewhat suddenly, at last, subjected to the social exactions that are levied on literary fame. But let the reader take along with him into these scenes what will alone enable him to judge them rightly.

Conversation is a game where the wise do not always win. When men talk together the acute man will count higher than the subtle man; and he who, though infinitely far from truth, can handle a solid point of argument, will seem wiser than the man around whom truth "plays like an atmosphere," but who cannot reason as he feels. The one forms opinions unconsciously, the other none for which he cannot show specific grounds; and it was not inaptly, though humorously, said by Goldsmith of himself, that he disputed best when nobody was by, and always got the better when he argued alone.² Society exposed him to continual mis-

¹ His "magnanimous" evidence against himself in the poem of *Retaliation*.

² An expression which exactly recalls what Addison is reported to have said of himself when some one remarked how much happier in conversation Steele was than the majority of those who talked with him. "Yes," said Addison, "he beats me in the room, but no sooner has he got to the bottom of the staircase than I have refuted all his arguments." "I have only ninepence in my pocket," he said on another occasion, distinguishing between his conversation and his writing, "but I can draw for a thousand pounds." Langton repeated this saying to Johnson, whereupon Boswell pleasantly

construction; so that few more touching things have been recorded of him than those which have most awakened laughter. "People are greatly mistaken in me," he remarked on one occasion. "A notion goes about that when I am silent I mean to be impudent; but I assure you, gentlemen, my silence arises from bashfulness."¹ From the same cause arose the unconsidered talk which was less easily forgiven than silence; with which we shall find so frequently mixed up the imputations of vanity and of envy; and to properly comprehend which there must always be kept in mind the grudging and long-delayed recognition of his genius. Exceptions no doubt there were. Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds were large exceptions; and with what excellent effect upon his higher nature a sense of his growing fame with such men as these descended will hereafter be plainly seen. Never is success obtained, if deserved, that it does not open and improve the mind; and never had Goldsmith reason to believe the world in any respect disposed to do him justice that he was not also most ready and desirous to do justice to others. But, even with the friends I have named, there remained too much of the fondness of pity, the familiarity of condescension, the air of generosity, the habit of patronage; too readily did these appear to justify an ill-disguised contempt, a sort of corporate spirit of disrespect,² in the rest of the men of letters of that circle; and when was the applause of even the highest yet counted a sufficient set-off against the depreciation of the lowest of mankind?

No one who thus examines the whole case can doubt, I think, that Goldsmith had never cause to be really content with his position among the men of his time, or with the

reports: "JOHNSON: 'He had not that retort ready, sir; he had prepared it beforehand.' LANGTON (turning to me): 'A fine surmise. Set a thief to catch a thief.'"—vii. 198.

¹ Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, 418-419.

² Even Johnson lost patience at this one day, and growled out, "If nobody was suffered to abuse poor Goldy but those who could write as well, he would have few enemies."—*European Magazine*, xxxi. 18.

portion of celebrity at any period during his life assigned to him. All men can patronize the useful, since it so well caters for itself, but, many as there are to need the beautiful, there are few to set it forth, and fewer still to encourage it; and even the booksellers who crowded round the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* and the *Traveller*, came to talk but of booksellers' drudgery and catch-penny compilations. Is it strange that as such a man stood amid the Boswells, Murphys, Beatties, Bickerstaffs, Grahams, Kellys, Hawkinses, and men of that secondary class, unconscious comparative criticism should have risen in his mind, and taken the form of a very innocent vanity? It is a harsh word, yet often stands for a harmless thing. May it not even be forgiven him if, in galling moments of slighting disregard, he made occasional silent comparison of *Rasselas* with the *Vicar*, of the *Rambler* with the *Citizen of the World*, of *London* with the *Traveller*? "Doctor, I should be glad to see you at Eton," said Mr. George Graham, one of the Eton masters and author of an indifferent *Masque of Tele-machus*,¹ as he sat at supper with Johnson and Goldsmith, indulging somewhat freely in wine, and arrived at that pitch in his cups, when he gave this invitation, of looking at one man and talking to another. "I shall be glad to wait upon you," answered Goldsmith. "No, no," replied Graham; "'tis not you I mean, Dr. *Minor*; 'tis Dr. *Major*, there."² "Now, that Graham," said Goldsmith afterwards,

¹ If any one would judge how far such a person as this Graham was entitled to address contemptuously such a man as Goldsmith, let him turn to a letter in the *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 193-195.

² *Boswell*, iv. 98. Mrs. Piozzi had told the anecdote before him with the addition that Goldsmith was so eager to respond to the invitation that he "proposed setting out with Mr. Johnson for Buckinghamshire in a fortnight" (180). She had heard it from Johnson, who used to tell the story himself; and "what effect," he would say, in conclusion, "this had on Goldsmith, who was as irascible as a hornet, may be easily conceived." Mr. Croker has justly remarked that out of it, and the epithet *Ursa Major* applied to Johnson by Boswell's father, Miss Reynolds had evidently manufactured the anecdote told in her *Recollections* (Croker's *Boswell*, 831). "At another time, a gentleman who was sitting between Dr. Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith, and with whom he had been disputing, remarked to an-

Beattie

"is a fellow to make one commit suicide"; and upon nothing graver than expressions such as this have men like Hawkins inferred that he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for his parts. "Indeed," pursues the musical knight, "he once entreated a friend to desist from praising him; 'for in doing so,' said he, 'you harrow up my soul'";¹

other, loud enough for Goldsmith to hear him, 'That he had a fine time of it, between *Ursa major* and *Ursa minor*!'

¹ *Life of Johnson*, 417. Hawkins appears to have coolly copied this absurd imputation on Goldsmith's sense, as well as his humanity and gratitude, from Tom Davies's *Life of Garrick* (ii. 151). Tom is its first author, and uses the very expression employed by Hawkins: "No more, I desire you; you harrow up my soul." See note above, and vol. ii. 215-216. So, again, Hawkins's statement is put in a general form by Beattie, who had no personal knowledge of the matter at all; and thus it is that mere unauthorized repetitions come to be quoted as additional testimony, and one ill-natured idle remark is the seed-plot of a forest of misstatements. Beattie's remark is in a letter to Forbes (*Life*, iii. 49), of the 10th July, 1788. "What she" (Mrs. Piozzi in her letters), "says of Goldsmith is perfectly true. He was the only person I ever knew who acknowledged himself to be envious. In Johnson's presence he was quiet enough, but in his absence expressed great uneasiness on hearing him praised. He even envied the dead; he could not bear that Shakespeare should be so much admired as he is. There might, however, be something like magnanimity in envying Shakespeare and Dr. Johnson; as in Julius Cæsar's weeping to think that at an age at which he had done so little, Alexander should have done so much. But surely Goldsmith had no occasion to envy me; which, however, he certainly did, for he owned it (though when we met he was always very civil); and I received undoubted information that he seldom missed an opportunity of speaking ill of me behind my back." The copy of Forbes's book from which I quote, having belonged to Mrs. Piozzi, is full of manuscript notes in her quaint, clear, beautiful hand; and to one of them, written at least thirty-three years after Goldsmith's death (the imprint to the edition is 1807), she subjoins the description of her old friend which appeared afterwards in her rhymed account of the Streatham portraits:

"From our Goldsmith's anomalous character, who
Can withhold his contempt and his reverence too?
From a poet so polished, so paltry a fellow
From critic, historian, or vile Punchinello!
From a heart in which meanness had made her abode,
From a foot that each path of vulgarity trod,
From a head to invent and a hand to adorn,
Unskilled in the schools, a philosopher born,

which it may be admitted was not at all improbable, if it was Hawkins praising him; for there is nothing so likely as a particular sort of praise to harrow up an affectionate soul. Such most certainly was Goldsmith's, and he loved with all his grateful heart whatever was lovable in Johnson. Boswell himself admits it, on more than one occasion; and contradicts much of what he has chosen to say on others, by the remark that in his opinion Goldsmith had not really more of envy than other people, but only talked of it freely.¹

That free talking did all the mischief. He was candid and simple enough to say aloud what others would more prudently have concealed. "Here's such a stir," he exclaimed to Johnson one day, in a company at Thrale's—it was when London had gone mad about Beattie's commonplace *Essay on Truth*, had embraced the author as "the long-delayed avenger of insulted Christianity," and had treated, flattered, and caressed him at last into a pension of £200 a year—"here's such a stir about a fellow that has written one book, and I have written many." "Ah, Doctor!" retorted Johnson on his discontented, disregarded, unpensioned friend, "there go two-and-forty sixpences, you know, to one guinea:"² whereat the lively Mrs. Thrale claps her hands with delight, and poor Goldsmith can but sulk in a corner. Being an author, it is true, he had no business to be thus thin-skinned, and should rather have been shelled like a rhinoceros; but a stronger man than he was might have

By disguise undefended, by jealousy smit,
 This *lusus naturæ*, nondescript in wit,
 May best be compared to those Anamorphoses
 Which for lectures to ladies th' optician proposes:
 All deformity seeming in some points of view,
 In others quite accurate, regular, true:
 Till the Student no more sees the figure that shock'd her
 But, all in his Likeness, *our odd little Doctor*."

My readers will have no difficulty in discerning, through the labored vivacity and forced antithesis of these indifferent lines, the small admixture of truth contained in them.

¹ Boswell, iii. 304.

² Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 179

fretted under the irritation of such doubtful wit, and been driven to even intemperate resentment. Into that he never was betrayed. With all that at various times, and in differing degrees, depressed his honest ambition, ruffled his pride, or invaded his self-respect, it will on the whole be sufficiently plain, by the time this narrative is closed, that no man more thoroughly, and even in his own despite, practised those gracious and golden maxims with which Edmund Burke this very year rebuked the hasty temper of his protégé Barry, and which every man should take forever to his heart. "Who can live in the world without some trial of his patience?" asked the statesman of the young painter, who had fallen into petty disputes at Rome. And then he warned him that a man never can have a point of mere pride that will not be pernicious to him; that we must be at peace with our species, if not for their sakes, yet very much for our own; and that the arms with which the ill dispositions of the world are to be combated, and the qualities by which it is to be reconciled to us and we reconciled to it, are moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves, "which are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them, but virtues of a great and noble kind, and such as dignify our nature as much as they contribute to our fortune and repose."

Well would it have been for the subject of this biography if the same justice which the world thus obtained from him, throughout their checkered intercourse, he had been able to obtain either from or for himself. It has not hitherto been concealed that, in whatever respect society may have conspired against him, he is not clear of the charge of having aided it by his own weakness; and still more evident will this be hereafter. With the present year ended his exclusive reliance on the booksellers, and, as though to mark it more emphatically, his old friend Newbery died;¹ but with the year that followed, bringing

¹ To the last poor Goldsmith's necessities followed him. At the back of

many social seductions in the train of the theatre, came a greater inability than ever to resist improvident temptation and unsuitable expense. His old habit of living merely from day to day beset every better scheme of life; the difficulty with which he earned money had not helped to teach him its value; and he became unable to apportion wisely his labor and his leisure. The one was too violent and the other too freely indulged. It is doubtful if the charge of gambling can be supported to more than a trifling extent; but in the midst of poverty he was too often profuse, into clothes and entertainments he threw money that should have liquidated debts, and he wanted courage and self-restraint to face the desperate arrears that still daily mounted up against him. Hardly ever did a new resource arise that did not bring with it a new waste and fresh demands upon his jaded powers.

But before we too sternly pronounce upon genius sacrificed thus, and opportunities thrown away, let the forty years which have been described in this biography; the thirty of unsettled habit and undetermined pursuit, the ten of unremitting drudgery and desolate toil; be calmly retraced and charitably judged. Nor let us omit from that consideration the nature to which he was born, the land in which he was raised, his tender temperament neglected in early youth, the brogue and the blunders which he described as his only inheritance; and when the gains are counted up which we owe to his genius, be it still with admission of its native and irreversible penalties. His gener-

a letter addressed to Newbery, dated the 28th March, 1767, in which the writer deploras his worthy publisher's illness, and prays to have his heart rejoiced by the re-establishment of his health, I find sundry pencil marks in Newbery's handwriting, which are probably our last remaining trace of his farewell visit to his favorite Society of Arts, of the jokes he heard there, of the good offices he did there, of the mistakes for which half-learned members got laughed at by the learned there. "You can't lay an egg but you must cackle. *Lent Dr. Goldsmith for his instrument, 10s. 6d.* Comb-ing the horse's tail. Mr. Hely's mistaking Tully's Latin for bad Latin." This letter forms part of the Newbery MSS. in Mr. Murray's possession frequently referred to in this biography.

ous warmth of heart, his transparent simplicity of spirit, his quick transitions from broadest humor to gentlest pathos, and that delightful buoyancy of nature which survived in every depth of misery—who shall undertake to separate these from the Irish soil in which they grew, where impulse predominates still over reflection and conscience, where unthinking benevolence yet passes for considerate goodness, and the gravest duties of life can be overborne by social pleasure or sunk in mad excitement? Manful, in spite of all, was Goldsmith's endeavor, and noble its result. He did not again draw back from the struggle in which at last he had engaged; unaided by a helping hand, he fought the battle out; and much might yet have been retrieved when death arrived so suddenly. Few men live at present, properly speaking; but are preparing to live at another time, which may or may not arrive.¹ The other time was cut from under Goldsmith; and out of such labor as his in the present few men could have snatched time to live. "Ah!" he exclaimed to a young gentleman of fortune, who showed him a very elaborate manuscript, "ah, Mr. Cradock! think of me, that must write a volume every month?"² Think of him, too, who wrote always in the presence of craving want, and, from his life's beginning to its end, had never known the assistance of a home. Eminently does his disposition seem to me to have been one that the domestic influences would have saved from the worst temptations, soon to be described, which beset his later life, could a happy marriage but have brought within the tranquillizing centre of home his desultory tastes, his unsettled habits, his too diffused affections, and eager cravings for applause. It was said of Burke that his every care used to vanish from

¹ It is, I think, in one of the admirable letters of either Pope or Swift that something of this kind is said. Let us humbly remember what sacred authority we have, too, that the will may sometimes be accepted for the deed. "And the Lord," says Solomon, "said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart."—*Kings*, book i. viii. 18.

² "Goldsmith truly said I was nibbling about elegant phrases, whilst he was obliged to write half a volume."—Cradock's *Memoirs*, iv. 288.

the moment he entered under his own roof; of himself Goldsmith could say no better than that at home or abroad, in crowds or in solitude, he was still carrying on a conflict with unrelenting care.¹

But one friend he had that never wholly left him, that in his need came still with comfort. Nature, who smiled upon him in his cradle, in this "garret" of Garden Court had not deserted him. Her school was open to him even here, and, in the crowd and glare of streets, but a step divided him from her cool and calm refreshments. Among his happiest hours were those he passed at his window, looking over into the Temple Gardens. Steam and smoke were not yet so all-prevailing but that, right opposite where he looked, the stately stream which washes the garden-foot might be seen, as though freshly "weaned from her Twickenham Naiades," flowing gently past. Nor had the benchers thinned the trees in those days; for they were that race

¹ Mr. De Quincey appears to think that he differs from me in these views, but the results at which he arrives are substantially the same, though I cannot take so cheerful a view of the general tenor of Goldsmith's life. Mr. De Quincey, however, is well entitled to be heard. "He enjoyed two great immunities from suffering that have been much overlooked; and such immunities that, in our opinion, four in five of all the people ever connected with Goldsmith's works, as publishers, printers, compositors (that is, men taken at random), have very probably suffered more, upon the whole, than he. The immunities were these: First, from any bodily taint of low spirits. He had a constitutional gayety of heart, an elastic hilarity, and, as he himself expresses it, 'a knack of hoping'—which knack could not be bought with Ormus and with Ind, nor hired for a day with the peacock throne of Delhi. . . . Another immunity he had of almost equal value, and yet almost equally forgotten by his biographers—viz., from the responsibilities of a family. Wife and children he had not. They it is that, being a man's chief blessings, create also for him the deadliest of his anxieties, that stuff his pillow with thorns, that surround his daily path with snares. . . . In short, Goldsmith enjoyed the two privileges, one subjective, the other objective, which, when uniting in the same man, would prove more than a match for all difficulties that could arise in a literary career to him who was at once a man of genius so popular, of talents so versatile, of reading so various, and of opportunities so large for still more extended reading. The subjective privilege lay in his buoyancy of animal spirits; the objective in his freedom from responsibilities."—De Quincey's *Works*, vi. 198-200 (Ed. 1857).

of benchers loved of Charles Lamb, who refused to pass in their treasurer's account "twenty shillings to the gardener for stuff to poison the sparrows." So there he sat, with the noisy life of Fleet Street shut out, and made country music for himself out of the noise of the old Temple rookery.¹ Luther used to moralize the rooks; and Goldsmith had illustrious example for the amusement he now took in their habits, as from time to time he watched them. He saw the rookery, in the winter deserted, or guarded only by some five or six, "like old soldiers in a garrison," resume its activity and bustle in the spring; and he moralized, like the great reformer, on the legal constitutions established, the social laws enforced, and the particular castigations endured for the good of the community, by those black-dressed and black-eyed chatterers. "I have often amused myself," he says, "with observing their plans of policy from my window in the Temple, that looks upon a grove

¹ So far Goldsmith had at least the advantage of Gray, who in one of the most delightful of all his letters, and which, for its whimsical, cordial humor and quiet gayety, at once contrasts with his pensive, contemplative moods, and yet takes a certain color from them too (just as it is the charm of his wit and satire that you can never divorce them from his manly truth and even kindness of feeling), thus compares Norton Nicholls's country refreshments with his own: "PEMBROKE COLLEGE, June 24, 1769. And so you have a garden of your own, and you plant and transplant, and are dirty and amused! Are not you ashamed of yourself? Why, I have no such thing, you monster, nor ever shall be either dirty or amused as long as I live. My gardens are in the windows, like those of a lodger up three pair of stairs in Petticoat Lane or Camomile Street, and they go to bed regularly under the same roof that I do. Dear, how charming it must be to walk out in one's own *gardening*, and sit on a bench in the open air, with a fountain and leaden statue, and a rolling stone, and an arbor: have a care of sore throats, though, and the *agoe*." See the entire letter in the *Works*, iv. 133-134. The reader who is curious in such things will find that the so-called correct version printed by Mr. Mitford from Dawson Turner's MS. (v. 91-92), is altogether inferior to this, as printed by Mason. Yet Mason was in this respect a monstrous offender too, as any one may see who refers to an admirable paper in the *Quarterly Review* (xciv. 1-4), where his villanous habit of adulterating, by way of improving, his friend's letters, is thoroughly exposed. Unpardonable in any case, it was particularly atrocious in that of Gray, who is of all writers the most choice and fastidious in even his most familiar diction.

where they have made a colony in the midst of the city."¹ Nor will we doubt that also from this wall-girt grove came many a thought that carried him back to childhood, made him free of solitudes explored in boyish days, and repeopled deserted villages. It was better than watching the spiders amid the dirt of Green Arbor Court; for though his grove was city planted, and scant of the foliage of the forest, there was Fancy to piece out for him, transcending these, far other groves and other trees,

Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Let us leave him to this happiness for a time before we pass to the few short years of labor, enjoyment, and sorrow, in which his mortal existence closed.

¹ *Animated Nature*, iv. 178-179.

BOOK THE FOURTH

GOLDSMITH, THE FRIEND OF JOHNSON, BURKE, AND REYNOLDS:
DRAMATIST, NOVELIST, AND POET

1767 to 1774

CHAPTER I

THE "GOOD-NATURED MAN"

1767-1768

It was little more than a month before the death of the elder Newbery that Burke read the comedy of the "Good-natured Man";¹ and thus, with mirth and sadness for its ushers, the last division of Goldsmith's life comes in. The bond of service so long continued, though checkered with mortifying incidents, could hardly be snapped without regret; nor could the long-attempted trial of the theatre, painful as its outset had been, without something of cheerfulness and hope approach its consummation. Newbery died on the 22d of December, 1767; and the performance of the comedy was now promised for the 28th of the following January.

Unavailingly, for special reasons, had Goldsmith attempted to get it acted before Christmas. Quarrels had broken out among the new proprietary of the theatre, and these were made excuses for delay. Colman had properly insisted on his right, as manager, to cast the part of Imogen to Mrs. Yates, rather than to a pretty-faced, simpering lady (Mrs. Lessingham)² whom his brother proprietor, Harris, "protected"; and the violence of the dispute became so notorious, and threatened such danger to the new manage-

¹ Richard Cumberland's *Memoirs*, i. 364. "His first comedy was read and applauded in its manuscript by Edmund Burke, and the circle in which he then lived." The hint for the title, as I have stated, occurs in the *Life of Nash*. And see *ante*, ii. 93.

² This lady began life by sharing Derrick's garret. For a curious account of her, see Taylor's *Records*, i. 5-8.

ment, that the papers describe Garrick "growing taller" on the strength of it. Tall enough he certainly grew to overlook something of the bitterness of Colman's first desertion of him; and civilities, perhaps arising from a sort of common interest in the issue of the Lessingham dispute, soon after recommenced between the rival managers. Bickerstaff (a clever and facile Irishman, who, ten years before, had somewhat suddenly thrown up a commission in the Marines, taken to theatrical writing for subsistence, and since obtained repute as the author of "Love in a Village" and the "Maid of the Mill") was just now pressing Colman with his opera of "Lionel and Clarissa"; and, in one of his querulous letters, seems to point at this resumption of intercourse with Garrick, whom he had himself offended by beginning to write for Colman. "When I talked with you last summer," he complains, writing on the 26th January, 1768, "I told you that it would be impossible to have my opera ready till after Christmas; and named about the 20th January. You received this with great goodness, said you were glad of it, because it would be the best time of the year for me, and then told me that Mr. Goldsmith's play should come out before Christmas; and this you repeated, and assur'd me of, more than once, in subsequent meetings. . . . The fact is, you broke your word with me, in ordering the representation of the 'Good-natur'd Man' in such a manner that it must unavoidably interfere with my opera. . . . At the reading it was said the 'Good-natur'd Man' should appear the Wednesday after; but at the same time it was whispered to me that it was privately determined not to bring it out till the Saturday fortnight, *and that there was even a promise given to Mr. Kelly that it should not appear till after his nights were over.*"¹

If such a promise had been given (and circumstances justify the suspicion), Goldsmith had better reason than has been hitherto supposed for that dissatisfaction with Colman and difference with Kelly which attended the performance

¹ MS. *penes me.*

of his comedy. Kelly had been taken up by Garrick, in avowed and not very generous rivalry to himself; it was the town talk, some weeks before either performance took place, that the two comedies, written as they were by men well known to each other and who had lived the same sort of life, were to be pitted against each other; and so broadly were they opposed in character and style that the first in the field, supposing it well received, could hardly fail to be a stumbling-block to its successor. Kelly had sounded the depths of sentimentalism. I have mentioned the origin of that school as of much earlier date; nor can it be doubted that it was with Steele the unlucky notion began, of setting comedy to reform the morals, instead of imitating the manners, of the age. Fielding slyly glances at this when he makes Parson Adams declare the "Conscious Lovers" to be the only play fit for a Christian to see, and as good as a sermon; and in so witty and fine a writer as Steele so great a mistake is only to be explained by the intolerable grossness into which the theatre had fallen in his day. For often does it happen in such reaction that good and bad suffer together; and that while one has the sting taken out of it, the other loses energy and manhood. Where a sickly sensibility overspreads both vice and virtue, we are in the

¹ It is fair at the same time to add that Cooke (who knew both well, and has left us anecdotes about Kelly also printed in the *European Magazine*) says the difference originated before Kelly's comedy was accepted, and was simply owing to the fact that he had presumed to attempt a comedy at all. "He was at this time much acquainted with Goldsmith and Bickerstaff, but except their barely hearing he was engaged that way, he scarcely ever mentioned the subject. . . . Goldsmith kept back and was silent; till one day, when asked about Kelly's writing a comedy, he said: 'He knew nothing at all about it—he had heard there was a *man of that name* about town who wrote in newspapers, but of his talents for comedy, or even the work he was engaged in, he could not judge.' This," adds Cooke, "would be a great drawback on the character of Goldsmith, if it arose from a general principle; but nothing could be further from the truth. He was kind, beneficent, and good-natured in the extreme, to all but those whom he thought his competitors in literary fame; but this was so deeply rooted in his nature, that nothing could cure it. Poverty had no terrors for him; but the applauses paid a brother poet 'made him poor indeed.'"—*European Magazine*, xxiv. 432.

right to care as little for the one as for the other; since it is life that the stage and its actors should present to us, and not anybody's moral or sentimental view of it. A most masterly critic of our time, William Hazlitt, has disposed of Steele's pretensions as a comic dramatist; and poor Hugh Kelly, who has not survived to our time, must be disinterred to have his pretensions judged; yet the stage continues to suffer, even now, from the dregs of the sentimental school, and it would not greatly surprise me to see the comedy with which Kelly's brief career of glory began again lift up a sickly head among us.¹

It is not an easy matter to describe that comedy. One can hardly disentangle, from the maze of cant and make-believe in which all the people are involved, what it precisely is they drive at; but the main business seems to be that there are three couples in search of themselves throughout the five acts, and enveloped in such a haze or mist of "False Delicacy" (the title of the piece) that they do not, till the last, succeed in finding themselves. There is a lord who has been refused, for no reason on earth, by a Lady Betty, who loves him, and who, with as little reason and as much delicacy on his own side, transfers his proposals to a friend of Lady Betty's, whom he does not love, and selects her ladyship to convey the transfer. There is Lady Betty's friend, who, being in love elsewhere, is shocked to receive his lordship's proposals; but, being under great obligations to Lady Betty, cannot in delicacy think of opposing what she fancies her ladyship has set her heart upon. There is a mild young gentleman, who is knocked hither and thither like a shuttlecock; now engaged to this young lady whom he does not love, now dismissed by that whom he does; and made at last the convenient means of restoring, with all proper delicacy, Lady Betty to his lordship. There is a young lady who in delicacy ought to marry the mild

¹ Shortly after the publication of these remarks in my first edition (1848) Mr. Farren, attracted by the part of the "slovenly old bachelor" to which I presently advert, announced a proposed revival of the play; but it was afterwards dropped.

young gentleman, but indelicately prefers instead to run away with a certain Sir Harry. There is Sally, her maid, who tells her mistress that she has transported her poor Sally "by that noble resolution" (to run away). And there is the delicate old Colonel, her father, who plays eavesdropper to her plan of flight; intercepts her in the act of it; gives her, in the midst of her wickedness, £20,000 (which he pulls out of a pocket-book), because he had promised it when she was good; and tells her to banish his name entirely from her remembrance, and be as happy as she can with the consciousness of having broken an old father's heart. There are only two people in the play with a glimmering of common-sense or character, an eccentric widow and a slovenly old bachelor, who are there to do for the rest what the rest have no power to do for themselves; and, though not without large infusions of silly sentimentality and squeamish charity, to bring back enough common-sense to furnish forth a catastrophe. It is the most mechanical of contrivances; yet it is the proof, if any were wanting, that such a piece has no life in itself; and it is the distinguishing quality, which, thanks to Mr. Kelly's example, in proportion as reality or character is absent from a modern comedy, will still be found its chief resource. Examples need not be cited. Mr. Kelly's style will never want admirers. While it saves great trouble and wit to both actor and author, it exacts from an audience neither judgment nor discrimination; and with an easy, indolent indulgence of such productions, there will always be mixed up a sort of secret satisfaction in their mouthing morals and lip-professions of humanity.

Let us not be so hard on our grandfathers and grandmothers for having taken so mightily to Mr. Kelly's "False Delicacy" as not to admit thus much. It had every advantage, too, in its production. Garrick not only wrote a prologue and epilogue, and was said to have heightened the old bachelor played by King, but went out of his way to induce Mrs. Dancer to forgive the abuse she had received in Mr. Kelly's *Thespis*, and act the widow. Produced on Satur-

day, the 23d of January, it was received with such singular favor that, though the management was under a solemn pledge "not for the future to run any new piece nine nights successively," it was played eight nights without intermission, and in the course of the season repeated more than twenty times. The publisher announced, the morning after its publication, that three thousand copies of it had been sold before two o'clock; so unabated did its interest continue that it had sold ten thousand before the season closed, Kelly had received a public breakfast at the "Chapter" coffee-house, and its publisher had expended twenty pounds upon a piece of plate as a tribute to his genius; it was translated into German, and (by order of the Marquis de Pombal) into Portuguese, while its French translation by Garrick's lively friend, Madame Riccoboni, had quite a run in Paris; and, to sum up all in a word, "False Delicacy" became the rage.

Poor Goldsmith may be forgiven if the sudden start of such successes a little dashed his hope at the last rehearsals of his "Good-natured Man." Colman had lost what little faith he ever had in it; Powell protested he could do nothing with Honeywood; Harris and Rutherford had from the first taken little part in it;¹ nor, excepting Shuter, were the actors generally more hopeful than the management. Goldsmith always remembered the timely good opinion of that excellent comedian, as well as the praise proffered him by a pretty actress (Miss Wilford, just become Mrs. Bulkley, of whom more hereafter) who played Miss Richland. What stood him most in stead, however, was the unwavering kindness of Johnson, who not only wrote the prologue he had promised, but went to see the comedy rehearsed; and as, some half-century before, Swift had stood by Addison's side at the rehearsal of his tragedy, wondering to hear the drab that played Cato's daughter laughing

¹ It is just to add, however, to what has already been stated on this subject (see vol. iii. 46), that, in his account of his quarrel with his fellow-proprietors, Colman expressly states that they "afterwards declared their entire approbation" of his acceptance of Goldsmith's comedy.—*A True State of the Difference, etc.*, 18.

in the midst of her passionate part, and crying out *What's next?*¹ one may imagine the equal wonder with which the kind-hearted sage by Goldsmith's side heard the mirth he so heartily admired, and had himself so loudly laughed at, rehearsed with doleful anticipations. The managerial face appears to have lengthened in exact proportion as the fun became broad, and when, against the strongest remonstrance, it was finally determined to retain the scene of the bailiffs, Colman afterwards told his friends that he had lost all hope.

The eventful night arrived at last—Friday, the 29th of January. It was not a club night,² though the evening of meeting was ultimately altered from Monday to this later day to suit a general convenience; but a majority of the members, following Johnson's and Reynolds's and Burke's example, attended the theatre, and agreed to close the evening in Gerrard Street. Cooke, now Goldsmith's neighbor in the Temple, and whom he had lately introduced to his Wednesday Club, was also present, and has spoken of what befell. Mr. Bensley, a stage lover of portentous delivery, seems to have thrown into the heavy opening of Johnson's prologue,

Prest by the load of life, the weary mind
Surveys the general toil of humankind,

¹ "I was this morning at ten at the rehearsal of Mr. Addison's play, called 'Cato,' which is to be acted on Friday. There were not above half a score of us to see it. We stood on the stage, and it was foolish enough to see the actors prompted every moment, and the poet directing them; and the drab" [Mrs. Oldfield] "that acts Cato's daughter laugh in the midst of a passionate part, and then calling out, 'What's next?' The Bishop of Clogher was there too; but he stood privately in a gallery."—Swift's *Journal to Stella*, 6th April, 1713. Works, iii. 148.

² Mrs. Thrale says it was (*Anecdotes*, 244), but her authority is not to be placed against that of Bishop Percy, *post*, chapter iv. 146-147. In Leslie and Taylor's *Life of Reynolds* (i. 283) it is assumed, from the simple entry in his engagement book on this day, "Dr. Goldsmith," that Reynolds "seems to have dined with the anxious author whom he was always ready to support and encourage," but it is more probable that the entry was to remind himself that the comedy was then to be acted, and that the club were afterwards to meet.

a ponderous gloom, which, at the outset, dashed the spirits of the audience. Nor did Mr. Powell's Honeywood mend matters much, with the more cheerful opening of the play. He had complained, at the rehearsals, that the part gave him "no opportunity of displaying his abilities"; and this it now became his care to make manifest. "Uniform tameness, not to say insipidity," was his contribution to the illustration of Honeywood. "He seemed, from the beginning to the end, to be a perfect disciple of Zeno." Shuter, on the other hand, going to work with Croaker after a different fashion, soon warmed the audience into his own enjoyment, and shocked the sentimentalists among them with the boisterous laughter he sent ringing through the house; nor was he ill seconded by the Lofty of Woodward, another excellent comedian, the effect of whose "contemptuous patronage" of Honeywood was long remembered.¹ But then came the bailiffs, on whom, being poorly acted and presenting no resistance that way, the disaffected party were able to take full revenge for what they thought the indelicacy of all such farcical mirth.² Accordingly, when good Mr. Twitch described his love for humanity, and Little Flannigan cursed the French for having made the beer threepence-halfpenny a pot, Cooke tells us that he heard people in the pit cry out this was "low" ("language uncommonly low," said the worthy *London Chronicle* in its criticism),³ and disapproba-

¹ I am here quoting lines and expressions from the notices of the acting of the comedy in the papers of the week when it appeared.

² "The bailiff and his blackguard followers appeared intolerable on the stage, yet we are not disgusted with them in the perusal," is the admission even of the *Monthly Review* (xxx. 160, February, 1768); its notice of the "Good-natured Man" as "an agreeable play to read," immediately following its notice of "False Delicacy" as "a very agreeable play to see."

³ "This whole scene in which those fellows perpetually joined conversation, in language uncommonly low, gave some offence, and it is hoped the author will for the future wholly omit it."—*London Chronicle* for January 28-30, 1768. I need hardly remind the reader of the pleasant use which Goldsmith made of this experience in his second comedy, or of the criticism called forth by Squire Lumpkin's song from the delicate frequenters of the "Three Jolly Pigeons." "FIRST FELLOW: 'The squire has got spunk in him.' SECOND FELLOW: 'I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us noth-

tion was very loudly expressed. The comedy, in short, was not only trembling in the balance, but the chances were decisively adverse, when Shuter came on with the "incendiary letter" in the last scene of the fourth act, and read it with such inimitable humor that it carried the fifth act through. To be composed at so truly comic an exhibition, says Cooke, "must have exceeded all power of face; even the rigid moral-mongers joined the full-toned roar of approbation." Poor Goldsmith meanwhile had been suffering exquisite distress; had lost all faith in his comedy and in himself; and, when the curtain fell, could only think of his debt of gratitude to Shuter. He hurried round to the green-room, says Cooke; "thanked him in his honest, sincere manner, before all the performers"; and told him "he had exceeded his own idea of the character, and that the fine, comic richness of his coloring made it almost appear as new to him as to any other person in the house."¹ Then, with little heart for doubtful congratulations, he turned off to meet his friends in Gerrard Street.

By the time he arrived there his spirits had to all appearance returned. He seemed to have forgotten the hisses. The members might have seen that he took no supper, but he chatted gayly as if nothing had happened amiss. Nay, to impress his friends still more forcibly with an idea of his magnanimity, he even sang his favorite song, which he never consented to sing but on special occasions, about *An Old Woman tossed in a Blanket seventeen times as high as the Moon*;² and was altogether very noisy and

ing that's low.' THIRD FELLOW: 'O damn anything that is low, I cannot bear it.' FOURTH FELLOW: 'The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time. If so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.' THIRD FELLOW: 'I like the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes: "Water parted," or "The minuet in Ariadne."'"

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 96.

² Another version of this famous ditty is supplied in the learned correspondence of Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Montague; but here the old woman is more decorously "drawn up in a basket three or four leagues, as high as

loud. But some time afterwards, when he and Johnson were dining with Percy at the chaplain's table at St. James's, he confessed what his feelings had this night really been; "made," said Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, "a very comical and unnecessarily exact recital" of them;¹ and told how the night had ended. "All this while," he said, "I was suffering horrid tortures; and verily believe that if I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that, and so they never perceived my not eating, nor I believe at all imaged to themselves the anguish of my heart. But when all were gone except Johnson here, I burst out a-crying, and even swore by — that I would never write again." Johnson sat in amazement while Goldsmith made the confession, and then confirmed it. "All which, Doctor," he said, "I thought had been a secret between you and me; and I am sure I would not have said anything about it for the world." That is very certain. No man so unlikely as Johnson, when he had a friend's tears to wipe away, critically to ask himself, or afterwards discuss, whether or not they ought to have been shed; but none so likely, if they came to be discussed by others, to tell you how much he despised them. What he says must thus be taken with what he does,² more especially in all his various opinions

the moon," and what it gains in decorum it seems to lose (as so often happens) in spirit.

¹ Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 244-246.

² Nay, let us remember what he has said, too, on this very subject. "Want of tenderness," we find from Dr. Maxwell's collectanea in *Boswell* (iii. 136-137), "he always alleged was want of parts, and was no less a proof of stupidity than depravity." How delightful is Pope's remark to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu! "I know you have tenderness; you must have it; it is the very emanation of good-sense and virtue; the finest minds, like the finest metals, dissolve the easiest."—*Works* (Ed. Roscoe), vi. 63. And who does not remember Juvenal?—

"Mollissima corda

Humano generi dare se Natura fatetur

Quæ lachrymas dedit: hæc nostri pars optima sensus."

—*Sat.* xv. 131-133.

of Goldsmith. When Mrs. Thrale asked him of this matter he spoke of it with contempt, and said that "no man should be expected to sympathize with the sorrows of vanity,"¹ But he *had* sympathized with them, at least to the extent of consoling them. Goldsmith never flung himself in vain on that great, rough, tender heart. The weakness he did his best to hide from even the kindly Langton, from the humane and generous Reynolds, was sobbed out freely there; nor is it difficult to guess how Johnson comforted him. "Sir," he said to Boswell, when that ingenious young gentleman, now a practising Scotch advocate, joined him a month or two later at Oxford, and talked slightly of the "Good-natured Man," "it is the best comedy that has appeared since the "Provok'd Husband." There has not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as that of Croaker. "False Delicacy" is totally devoid of character."² Who can doubt that Goldsmith had

¹ Admirable is the advice that follows: "If you are mortified by any ill usage, whether real or supposed, keep at least the account of such mortifications to yourself, and forbear to proclaim how meanly you are thought on by others, unless you desire to be meanly thought of by all."—*Anecdotes*, 246.

² *Boswell*, iii. 37-38. "Sir," continued he, "there is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners; and *there* is the difference between the characters of Fielding and those of Richardson. Characters of manners are very entertaining; but they are to be understood by a more superficial observer than characters of nature, where a man must dive into the recesses of the human heart." This too, I may say, though ill applied in the special case of the novel writers, is substantially the verdict which Gibbon's friend, M. Deyverdun, who with the historian edited the *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne pour l'an* 1768, delivers on the two principal comedies of the year. Remarking on the fact that the public seemed to have preferred Kelly to Goldsmith, he says that he must be bold enough to appeal from a sentence which fashion rather than taste had dictated. He speaks highly of the situations and management of the mere story in Kelly's play, but gives the palm of character and humor to Goldsmith; and though he observes (a valuable piece of evidence, by-the-by) that Goldsmith's play might in general have been better acted, and had greater justice done to it by the performers, he yet tells us that Croaker and Lofty had at least succeeded in making every one laugh heartily—*qui rient encore*—who still were in the habit of indulging in that unfashionable weakness. Let me add that Mrs. Inchbald, a

words of reassurance at the least as kindly as these to listen to as he walked home that night from Gerrard Street with Samuel Johnson?

Nor were other and substantial satisfactions wanting. His comedy was repeated with increased effect on the removal of the bailiffs, and its announced publication excited considerable interest. Griffin was the publisher; paid him £50 the day after its appearance; and, in announcing a new edition the following week, stated that the whole of the first "large impression" had been sold on the second day. But perhaps Goldsmith's greatest pleasure in connection with the printed comedy was that he could "shame the rogues" and print the scene of the bailiffs. Nowadays it is difficult to understand the objection which condemned it, urged most strongly, as we find it, by the coarsest writers of the time. When such an attempt as Honeywood's to pass off the bailiffs for his friends gets condemned as unworthy of a gentleman, comedy seems in sorry plight indeed. "The town will not bear Goldsmith's low humor," writes the not very decent Hoadly, the bishop's son,¹ to Garrick, "and justly. It degrades his Good-natur'd Man, whom they were taught to pity and have a sort of respect for, into a low buffoon; and, what is worse, into a falsifier, a character unbecoming a gentleman." Happily for us,

woman of true genius, says of the leading characters in the comedy: "The characters of Croaker, of Honeywood, and of Lofty, each deserve this highest praise which fictitious characters can receive. In fiction they are perfectly original, yet are seen every day in real life."

¹ John Hoadly, younger brother of the author of the "Suspicious Husband," was a great friend of Garrick's; was one of the most clever and voluminous, but (though a dignitary and pluralist of the church, master of St. Cross, and Chancellor of Winchester) not the most decent, of his correspondents; and was himself a writer of pieces, both tragic, comic, and pastoral, none of which have kept the stage.

² Hoadly to Garrick. *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 506. Yet the age had not become too refined for Fondlewife and Ben, two of Yates's favorite characters; and Goldsmith may be forgiven the sneer with which he is said to have expressed his surprise, somewhat later, "in this refined age, to see Lord North and all his family in the stage box at the 'Old Bachelor'; though to be sure, the fact of Mr. Yates having been admonished

Goldsmith printed the low humor notwithstanding. It had been cut out in the acting, he said, in deference to the public taste, "grown of late, perhaps, too delicate"; and was now replaced in deference to the judgment of a few friends "who think in a particular way." The particular way became more general when his second comedy laid the ghost of sentimentalism; and one is glad to know that, though it was but the year before his death, he saw his well-beloved bailiffs restored to the scene,¹ of which they have ever since been the most popular attraction. With the play the prologue, of course, was printed; and here Goldsmith had another satisfaction, in the alteration of a line that had been laughed at. "Don't call me *our* LITTLE *bard*," he said to Johnson; and "our anxious bard" was good-naturedly substituted.² But what Boswell interposes on this head simply shows us how uneasy he was, not when Johnson's familiar diminutives, more fond than respectful, were used by himself, but when they passed into the mouths of others. "I have often desired Mr. Johnson not to call me Goldy," was his complaint to Davies.³ It was a courteous way of saying,

not to sing 'The Soldier and the Sailor' in that other refined comedy of 'Love for Love,' was a gratifying proof of delicacy." This was a fact, and so enraged Yates that he swore he had sung the song for forty years, and would sing it still.—Cradock's *Memoirs*, iv. 283-284.

¹ Lee Lewes, who had then just obtained a reputation by his performance of Young Marlow, played Lofty on the occasion, it being for the benefit of Mrs. Green, who had the good taste to hold out the inducement in her play-bills that "in act the third, by particular desire, will be restored the original scene of the Bailiffs."—*Some Account of the Stage*, v. 372.

² "Amidst the toils of this returning year
When senators and nobles learn to fear,
Our little bard, without complaint, may share," etc.

Malone used to refer to this eagerly desired omission as one of the most characteristic traits he knew of Goldsmith.—Taylor's *Records*, i. 119.

³ I quote Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*. "Thursday, Oct. 14, 1773. When Dr. Johnson awaked this morning, he called 'Lanky!' having, I suppose, been thinking of Langton, but corrected himself instantly, and cried, 'Bozzy!' He has a way of contracting the names of his friends. Goldsmith feels himself so important now as to be displeased at it. I remember one day, when Tom Davies was telling that Dr. Johnson said,

"I wish *you* wouldn't call me Goldy, whatever Mr. Johnson does."

The comedy was played ten consecutive nights; their Majesties commanding it on the fifth night (a practice not unwise, though become unfashionable); and the third, when Reynolds enters in his note-book that he was again present, the sixth, and the ninth being advertised as appropriated to the author. But though this seems a reasonably fair success there is no reason to doubt Cooke's statement that, even with the sacrifice of the bailiffs, it rather *dragged* than supported itself buoyantly through the remainder of the season. Shuter gave it an eleventh night, a month later, by selecting it for his benefit, when Goldsmith, in a fit of extravagant good-nature, sent him ten guineas (perhaps at the time the last he had in the world) for a box ticket. It was again, after an interval of three years, played three nights;¹ and it was selected for Mrs. Green's benefit the second year after that, when the bailiffs reappeared. This is all I can discover of its career upon the London stage while the author yet lived to enjoy it.

'We are all in labor for a name to Goldy's play,' Goldsmith cried, 'I have often desired him not to call me Goldy.'"—*Boswell*, v. 40.

¹ *Some Account of the Stage*, v. 307. But the reader may judge with what chance of better success, when the ponderous Bensley had replaced Powell in the hero, and Lofty, now played by a Mr. Kniveton, profited no longer by the whim and eccentricity of Woodward.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENTS, HUMBLE CLIENTS, AND SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAYS

1768

On the stage, then, the success of Goldsmith's comedy of the "Good-natured Man" was far from equal to its claims of character, wit, and humor; yet its success, in other respects, very sensibly affected its author's ways of life. His three nights had produced him nearly £400; Griffin had paid him £100 more; and for any good fortune of this kind his past fortunes had not fitted him. So little, he would himself say, was he used to receive money "in a lump" that when Newbery made him his first advance of twenty guineas his embarrassment was as great as Captain Brazen's in the play, whether he should build a privateer or a play-house with the money.¹ He now took means hardly less effective to disembarass himself of the profits of his comedy. "He descended from his attic story in the Staircase, Inner Temple," says Cooke (who here writes somewhat hastily, one descent from the "attic" having already been made), "and purchased chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple, for which he gave four hundred pounds."² They were number two on the second floor, on the right hand ascending the staircase; and consisted of two reasonably sized, old-fashioned rooms, with a third smaller room or sleeping-closet, which he furnished handsomely, with "Wilton" carpets, "blue morine-covered" mahogany sofas, blue morine curtains, chairs corresponding, chimney-glasses,

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 92.

² *Ib.* 171.

Pembroke and card tables, and tasteful book-shelves.¹ Thus, and by payment for the lease of the chambers, the sum Cooke mentions would seem to have been expended; and with it began a system of waste and debt, involving him in difficulties he never surmounted. The first was in the shape of money borrowed from Mr. Edmund Bott, a barrister who occupied the rooms opposite his on the same floor, where he had in this year Reynolds and other common friends to meet him at dinner;² who remained very intimate with him for the rest of his life, and who has now this double title to be remembered, that his portrait was taken by Reynolds's pencil and his treatise on the *Poor Laws* revised by Goldsmith's pen. Exactly below the poet's were the chambers of Mr. Blackstone; and the rising lawyer, at this time finishing the fourth volume of his *Commentaries*, is reported to have made frequent complaint of the distracting social noises that went on above. A Mr. Children succeeded him, and made the same complaint.

The nature of the noises may be presumed from what is stated on the authority of a worthy Irish merchant settled in London (Mr. Seguin), to two of whose children Goldsmith stood godfather; and whose intimacy with the poet descended as an heirloom to his family, by whom every tradition of it has been carefully cherished. Members of this family recollected also other Irish friends (a Mr. Pollard, of Castle Pollard, and his wife) who visited London at this time, and were entertained by Goldsmith.³ They remembered dinners at which Johnson, Percy, Bickerstaff, Kelly, "and a variety of authors of minor note," were guests. They talked of supper parties with younger people, as well in the London chambers as in suburban lodgings, preceded by blind man's buff, forfeits, or games of cards; and where Goldsmith, festively entertaining them all, would make frugal supper for himself off boiled milk. They related

¹ I quote from a "catalogue" of his furniture, etc., in Mr. Murray's possession.

² Note-books in *Life of Reynolds* by Leslie and Taylor, i. 275.

³ *Prior*, ii. 192-193.

how he would sing all kinds of Irish songs; with what special enjoyment he gave the Scotch ballad of "Johnny Armstrong" (his old nurse's favorite); how cheerfully he would put the front of his wig behind, or contribute in any other way to the general amusement; and to what accompaniment of uncontrollable laughter he "danced a minuet with Mrs. Seguin."

Through all the distance of time may not one see even yet, moving through the steps of the minuet, that clumsy little, ill-built figure, those short, thick legs, those plain features—all the clumsier and plainer for the satin-grain coat, the garter, blue silk breeches, the gold sprig buttons, and the rich, straw-colored, tamboured waistcoat—yet with every sense but of honest gladness and frank enjoyment lost in the genial good-nature, the beaming mirth and truth of soul, the childlike glee and cordial fun, which turn into a cheerful little hop the austere majesty of the stateliest of all the dances? Nor let me omit from these agreeable memories a delightful anecdote which the same Mr. Ballantyne who has told us of the Wednesday Club pleasantly preserves for us in his *Mackliniana*. It introduces to us the scene of another "cheerful little hop," which, at about this time also, Macklin, the actor, gave at his house, when "Dr. Goldsmith, the facetious Dr. Glover, Fenton, the accomplished Welsh bard, and the humane Tom King, the comedian, were of the party." On this occasion so entirely happy was Goldsmith that he danced and threw up his wig to the ceiling, and cried out that "men were never so much like men as when they looked like boys!" Little of the self-satisfied importance which Boswell is most fond of connecting with him is to be discovered in recollections like these.

And they are confirmed by Cooke's more precise account of scenes he witnessed at the Wednesday Club, where Goldsmith's more intimate associates seem now to have attempted to restrain the too great familiarity he permitted to the humbler members. An amusing instance is related. The fat man who sang songs had a friend in a certain Mr. B., described as a good sort of man and an eminent pig-butcher,

who piqued himself very much on his good-fellowship with the author of the *Traveller*, and whose constant manner of drinking to him was, "Come, Noll, here's my service to you, old boy!" Repeating this one night after the comedy was played, and when there was a very full club, Glover went over to Goldsmith, and said in a whisper that he ought not to allow such liberties. "Let him alone," answered Goldsmith, "and you'll see how civilly I'll let him down." He waited a little; and, on the next pause in the conversation, called out aloud with a marked expression of politeness and courtesy, "Mr. B., I have the honor of drinking your good health." "Thanke'e, thanke'e, Noll," returned Mr. B., pulling his pipe out of his mouth and answering with great briskness. "Well, where's the advantage of your reproof?" asked Glover. "In truth," remarked Goldsmith, with an air of good-humored disappointment, intended to give greater force to a stroke of meditated wit, "I give it up; I ought to have known before now there is no putting a pig in the right way."¹

The same authority informs us of liberties not quite so harmless as Mr. B.'s, and wit quite as flat as Goldsmith's, practised now and then on the poet for more general amusement by the choicer spirits of the 'Globe.' For example, he had come into the club-room one night, eager and clamorous for his supper, having been out on some "shooting party" and taken nothing since the morning. The wags were still round the table, at which they had been enjoying them-

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 260.

² Among such spirits we may imagine the experience picked up to which Mrs. Thrale has referred in one of her letters. "I was like some famous boxer that was knocked down by a farthing candle artfully slung at his head, while yet bleeding and bruised to death almost from a victory newly won. Dr. Goldsmith, whose feet 'every path of vulgarity trod,' told us once of an ale-house wager. A man betted that he would produce a person who should perform this operation on some well-known hero of the fist; who, not being apprised of the frolic and panting for breath and refreshment, felt this sudden hit upon his temporal artery, and dropped down demolished by a farthing candle."—Hayward's *Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi*, ii. 149.

selves, when a dish of excellent mutton chops, ordered as he came in, was set before the famishing poet. Instantly one of the company rose, and went to another part of the room. A second pushed his chair away from the table. A third shewed more decisive signs of distress, connecting it with the chops in a manner not to be mistaken. "How the waiter could have dared to produce such a dish!" was at last the reluctant remark to Goldsmith's alarmed inquiries. "Why, the chops were offensive; the fellow ought to be made to eat them himself." Anxious for supper as he was, the plate was at once thrust from him; the waiter violently summoned into the room; and an angry order given that he should try to make his own repast of what he had so impudently set before a hungry man. The waiter, now conscious of a trick, complied with affected reluctance; and Goldsmith, more quickly appeased than enraged, as his wont was, ordered a fresh supper for himself, "and a dram for the poor devil of a waiter, who might otherwise get sick from so nauseating a meal."¹

Another incident belonging to this year or the following shows him in still stranger scenes and more doubtful company. There was a wild, eccentric creature named Parker, who had been sailor, soldier, exciseman, and strolling player, was now eager to get upon the London stage, and through Shuter had made interest with Goldsmith to intercede for him with Colman. Unsuccessful in this, he set up as wandering lecturer on elocution, and ended by writing memoirs and adventures, in one of which (*Life's Painter*), describing London night-houses and a particular drink called "Hot," he related how strangely he had partaken of it in company with Shuter and Goldsmith. The three had passed the evening at the actor's house, and he and Shuter were seeing Goldsmith, "that darling of his age," to his chambers in the Temple, "when Shuter prevailed on the Doctor to step into one of these houses, just to see a little fun, as he called it." The fun, however, proved to be of somewhat too strong a

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 200.

flavor, and the language employed by one of Shuter's acquaintances revealed suddenly to Goldsmith, with a great shock, the society he had been brought into. "Good God!" he exclaimed, rising from his seat and rushing out of the "box" in what Parker calls a great perturbation of mind, "and have I been sitting in company all this while with a hangman?"¹

Before I pass from these strange and eccentric pages in the life of my hero, it will be proper to mention Kelly's withdrawal from the Wednesday Club. Alleged attacks by Goldsmith on his comedy having been repeated to him with exaggeration—such as a remark, on being told of the contemplated foreign translations, that except for the booths of foreign fairs they were little likely to be required; and an impetuous refusal to write again for the stage, while such trash as "False Delicacy" continued to attract audiences—Kelly resolved to resent the unfriendliness. What the exact character of their friendship had been, I cannot precisely ascertain; but though recent, it had probably for a time been intimate. Kelly succeeded Jones as editor of the *Public Ledger*, and the common connection with Newbery must have brought them much together; we find Kelly, as the world and its prospects became brighter with him, moving into chambers in the Temple, near Goldsmith's; nor is it difficult to believe the report of which I have found several traces, that but for his sensible remonstrance on the prudential score, his wife's sister, who lived in his house, and was as pretty and poor as his wife, being simply, as she had been, an expert and industrious needlewoman, would have been carried off and wedded by Goldsmith.² Since their

¹ The extract from Parker's book, and some account of the author, will be found in *Notes and Queries*, 2d Series, iv. 168.

² Cooke, after mentioning Kelly's marriage, and what an excellent manager the needlewoman proved, goes on to say expressly: "Dr. Goldsmith, who visited Kelly some years after, confessed this, and was so struck with the comforts and conveniences of matrimony that he proposed for the other sister; but Kelly resisted this upon very honorable grounds. He knew his sister-in-law to be the very reverse of his wife in temper and economy; he likewise knew Goldsmith to be very thoughtless in respect to

respective comedies they had not met; when, abruptly encountering each other one night in the Covent Garden green-room, Goldsmith stammered out awkward congratulations to Kelly on his recent success, to which the other, prepared for war, promptly replied that he could not thank him because he could not believe him. "From that hour they never spoke to one another";¹ and Kelly, reluctant that Goldsmith should be troubled to "do anything more for him," resigned the club. The latter allusion was (by way of satire) to a story he used to tell of the terms of Goldsmith's answer to a dinner invitation which he had given him. "I would with pleasure accept your kind invitation," so ran the whimsical and very pardonable speech, "but to tell you the truth, my dear boy, my *Traveller* has found me a home in so many places that I am engaged, I believe, three days. Let me see. To-day I dine with Edmund Burke, to-morrow with Dr. Nugent,² and the next day with Topham Beauclerc; but I'll tell you what *I'll do for you*, I'll dine with you on Saturday."³ Now Kelly,

worldly affairs, and not very industrious; he, therefore, remonstrated with him on the great impropriety of such a match, till with some difficulty and address he weaned him from the pursuit."—*European Magazine*, xxiv. 339. The same writer seems to me to put very sensibly the art or tact by which a writer so inferior to Goldsmith as Kelly had for the moment raised himself to the same level of stage success: "Goldsmith had the superiority of genius and education, but would not bend either beneath the level of his own understanding; whilst Kelly, who understood little more than the surface of things, better accommodated his knowledge to all the vicissitudes of public opinion."

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 170.

² Again with Burke, that would be; for he and his father-in-law lived together at this time. The name was probably mistaken for that of Chamier, or some other of Goldsmith's club friends.

³ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 171. Incidental evidence is certainly afforded by Reynolds's note-books of this year, not only of the increase of Goldsmith's dinings out, but of the also unhappily increasing frequency of his dinners at home. Reynolds went for a few weeks' trip to Paris in the autumn, returning on Sunday, the 23d of October, and on "Monday, 24th, dined with Dr. Goldsmith," is the first entry after his return. "This dinner," Mr. Taylor adds, "is followed next day by another; and during the remainder of the year there are frequent engagements with the Doctor, now living in his new rooms at Brick Court. . . . One of these engagements for Wednesday, the 23d of November, must have been just after

though conceited and not very scrupulous, was not an ill-natured man, on the whole; he wrote a novel called *Louisa Mildmay*, which, with some scenes of a questionable kind of warmth, an ill-natured man could not have written; but he was not justified in the tone he took during this quarrel, and after it. It was not for him to sneer at Goldsmith's follies, who was for nothing more celebrated than for his own unconscious imitations of them; who was so fond, in his little gleam of prosperity, of displaying on his sideboard the plate he possessed that he added to it his silver spurs;¹ and who, even as he laughed at his more famous countryman's Tyrian bloom and satin, was displaying his own corpulent little person at all public places in "a flaming broad, silver-laced waistcoat, bag-wig, and sword."²

Mr. William Filby's bill marks the 21st of January as the day when the "Tyrian bloom satin grain, and garter, blue silk breeches" (charged £8 2s. 7d.) were sent home; and doubtless this was the suit ordered for the comedy's first night. Within three months, Mr. Filby having meanwhile been paid his previous year's account by a draft on Griffin,³ an-

Reynolds had been made president of the New Academy. . . . There is one 6th of October engagement, too, to Mr. Bott, Goldsmith's opposite neighbor in Brick Court; and traces of a visit, doubtless with Goldsmith, to the Shilling-Rubber Club held at the Devil Tavern."—*Life*, i. 290.

¹ Johnson mentioned this characteristic fact to Mr. John Nichols.—*Boswell*, viii. 411.

² I quote from a notice of Kelly, also written by Cooke in the *European Magazine*, xxiv. 421.

³ I subjoin the entries for 1767 and 1768 from Mr. William Filby's ledger (whom Newbery miscalled Pilby, I find by reference to his original MSS., while Boswell misnamed him John), as given in *Prior*, ii. 231-232.

"Mr. Oliver Goldsmith, Dr.

Brick Court, Temple, No. 2, up two pair of stairs.

1767.	Brought from fol. 26	£25 19	2½
March 4.	To superfine suit complete	6 0	9
June 19.	To suit complete	6 1	6
Sept. 8.	To superfine cloth breeches	1 2	0
Oct. 2.	To suit of state mourning	6 8	9
Dec. 26.	To black thickset breeches	1 1	0
	28. To superfine frock suit	5 12	0
		£52 5	2½

(Paid by a draft on Griffin, Feb. 6, 1768.)

other more expensive suit ("lined with silk and gold buttons") was supplied; and in three months more, the entry on the same account of "a suit of mourning," furnished on the 16th of June, marks the period of his brother Henry's death. At the close of the previous month, in the village of Athlone, had terminated, at the age of forty-five, that life of active piety and humble but noble usefulness whose unpretending Christian example, far above the worldlier fame he had himself acquired, his younger brother's genius has consecrated forever. Shortly after he had tidings of his loss the character of the village preacher was most probably written; for certainly the lines which immediately precede it were composed about a month before. From his father and his brother alike, indeed, were drawn the exquisite feat-

1768.

Jan.	21.	To Tyrian bloom satin grain and garter blue			
		silk breeches	£8	2	7
March	17.	To suit of clothes — color, lined with silk,			
		and gold buttons	9	7	0
June	16.	To suit of mourning	5	12	6
July	22.	To 2 yards of green livery cloth	1	2	0
Aug.	29.	To suit cleaned	0	6	0
Sept.	24.	To coat and waistcoat cleaned and made up	0	14	0
	30.	To fine worsted breeches	1	2	0
Nov.	29.	To suit of grain mixture	5	14	6
		To man	0	1	0
			£32	1	7

(Paid Oct. 9, 1769, by a note on Mr. Griffin, three months after date, for £33.)"

And now, as I am again on this subject of dress, which so sadly plagues poor Goldsmith's memory, let me take the opportunity of remarking that sobriety of costume really was the exception rather than the rule of the period. I shall have something to record shortly of the wardrobe of the Macaronis, and meanwhile Horne Tooke's biographer may give us, from the year now present, a glimpse of the "fashionable" clothes in which the Vicar of New Brentford was wont to disport himself during intervals of holiday from his ministerial duties, and a relay of which he kept privately at Paris for that purpose. Among them we find suits of scarlet and gold, of white and silver, of blue and silver, of flowered silk, of black silk, and of black velvet. See Stephens's *Life of Horne Tooke* (letter dated 25th May, 1767), i. 83.

ures of this sketch ; but of the so recent grief we may find marked and unquestionable trace, as well in the sublime and solemn image at the close as in those opening allusions to Henry's unworldly contentedness, which already he had celebrated, in prose hardly less beautiful, by that dedication to the *Traveller* which he put forth and paraded with as great a sense of pride derived from it as though it proclaimed the patronage of a prince or noble. Now, too, is repeated, with yet greater earnestness, his former tribute to his brother's hospitality.

A man he was to all the country dear ;
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change, his place ;
Unpractis'd he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour,
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize—
More skill'd to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train ;
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain :
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast ;
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd ;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away—
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch and show'd how fields were won.
Pleas'd with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe ;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And even his failings lean'd to virtue's side :
But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all ;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledg'd offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood : at his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul ;

Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
 And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.
 At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
 His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
 Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
 And fools who came to scoff remain'd to pray.¹
 The service pass'd, around the pious man,
 With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
 Even children follow'd, with endearing wile,
 And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile:
 His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,
 Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distress'd.
 To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
 But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven:
 As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.²

¹ Here one may, perhaps, perceive another of the many evidences which Goldsmith's writings afford of his familiarity with turns and expressions in the poetry of Dryden:

"Our vows are heard betimes, and heaven takes care
 To grant, before we can conclude the pray'r;
 Preventing angels met it half the way,
 And sent us back to praise who came to pray."

—*Britannia Rediviva*, in Scott's *Dryden*, x. 289.

² Gilbert Wakefield (in his *Memoirs*) calls this "perhaps the sublimest simile that English poetry can boast," and produces a passage from Claudian strongly resembling it, which, however, is not very likely to have fallen in Goldsmith's way. To my friend Lord Lytton I owe the knowledge of another and very curious resemblance between it and some lines in a poem on the ills and inconveniences of old age, written by the Abbé de Chaulieu, whom Voltaire so much admired, and who felt the ills he celebrates so little that when he had passed his eightieth year he was the declared lover of Mademoiselle de Launay.

"Au milieu cependant de ces peines cruelles
 De notre triste hiver, compagnes trop fidèles,
 Je suis tranquille et gai. Quel bien plus précieux
 Puis-je espérer jamais de la bonté des dieux!
 Tel qu'un rocher dont la tête,
 Égalant le Mont Athos,
 Voit à ses pieds la tempête
 Troubler le calme des flots,
 La mer autour bruit et gronde;
 Malgré ses émotions,

The idea of the *Deserted Village* was thrown out at the close of the *Traveller*

(Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling, long-frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forc'd from their homes....),

and on the general glad acceptance of that poem he had at once turned his thoughts to its successor. The subject of the growth of trade and opulence in England, of the relation of labor to the production of wealth, and of the advantage or disadvantage of its position in reference to manufactures and commerce, or as connected with the cultivation of land, which, two years after the *Traveller* appeared, Adam Smith exalted into a philosophic system by the publication of his immortal *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, was one that Goldsmith had frequently adverted to in his earliest writings, and on which his views were undoubtedly less sound than poetical. It may be worth remark indeed, that, a favorite subject of reflection as this theme always was with him, and often as he adverts to such topics connected with it as the effects of luxury and wealth on the simpler habits of a people, it is difficult to believe that he had ever arrived at a settled conclusion in his own mind, one way or the other. What he pleads for in his poetry, his prose for the most part condemns. Thus the argument of the *Deserted Village* is distinctly at issue with the philosophy of the *Citizen of the World*,¹ in which he reasons that to the accumulation of wealth may be assigned not only the greatest part of our knowledge, but even of our virtues; and exhibits poets, philosophers, and even patriots, marching in luxury's train. On the other hand, he occasionally again breaks out² into

Sur son front élevé règne une paix profonde,
Que tant d'agitations
Et que ses fureurs de l'onde
Respectent à l'égal du nid des alcyons."

¹ Letter xi.

² As in the *Animated Nature*, ii. 223.

complaints as indignant as they are shallow and ill founded, that "the rich should cry out for liberty while they thus starve their fellow-creatures" (he is alluding to the obligation on the poor to sell and give up what they possess at the call of the rich, as if it were a hardship that they should not be paid for themselves enjoying what they are paid for surrendering to others), "and feed them up with an imaginary good while they monopolize the real benefits of nature." The real truth is that Goldsmith had no settled opinions on the subject, which nevertheless was one of unceasing interest to him, and to which he brought a mind at least so far free from prejudice, one way or the other, that at this moment it was open to reason and at the next to sentiment merely.¹ Doubtless, however, the latter was most strongly felt and oftener indulged. For his merely sentimental views had grown out of early impressions, were passionately responded to by the warmer sensibilities of his nature, and had received supposed corroboration from his own experience. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds that for four or five years before the *Deserted Village* was published, he had, by sundry country excursions into various parts of

¹ Yet Johnson himself on these matters betrayed often hardly less inconsistency. I call to mind one of the most subtle and curious remarks made by him in almost the whole of *Boswell*, which closes, notwithstanding, with a singular contradiction. "Depend upon it," he said to Boswell in the Hebrides (iv. 252), "this rage of trade will destroy itself. You and I shall not see it; but the time will come when there will be an end of it. Trade is like gaming. If a whole company are gamblers, play must cease; for there is nothing to be won. When all nations are traders there is nothing to be gained by trade, and it will stop first where it is brought to the greatest perfection. Then the proprietors of land only will be the great men." As if, while all classes were becoming merged in the universal equality of trade, any particular class could yet continue to hold itself aloof and apart, entirely self-dependent and sustaining! It is only fair to add, of those passages of doubtful wisdom in the *Animated Nature* to which I refer in my text, that while they exhibit the poet's political economy at its very worst, they also display the warmth of his desire to benefit the poor, and show by what vivid recollections of the travel of his youth, and of the contrast then observed between the peasantry of his own and other countries, he was betrayed into his hasty conclusions. See among others ii. 223-224.



England, verified his fears of the tendency of overgrowing wealth to depopulate the land ;¹ and his remark to a friend who called upon him the second morning after he commenced the poem was nearly to the same effect. "Some of my friends differ with me on this plan," he said, after describing the scheme, "and think this depopulation of villages does not exist; but I am myself satisfied of the fact. I remember it in my own country, *and have seen it in this.*"²

The friend who so called upon him in May, 1768, who marks the date as exactly two years before the poem appeared, and who tells us that the writing of it and its elaborate revision extended over that whole interval of twenty-four months, was supposed by Scott to have been Lee Lewes, the actor. It is difficult to understand how this mistake originated; but it would seem that Sir Walter had judged from only a small portion of the papers whose authorship he thus misstated, and which, except in apparently imperfect and garbled extracts, have equally escaped all Goldsmith's biographers and never been properly made use of until now. The poet's acquaintance with the comedian had not yet begun, nor in the acknowledged (and extremely dull) *Memoirs of Lee Lewes* does Goldsmith's name at any time occur. The real writer of the anecdotes was Cooke, the young law student already so often referred to as Goldsmith's countryman and near neighbor in the Temple; and their curious details, till now, have been almost wholly overlooked. They appeared from time to time, as I have before stated, in the *European Magazine*.

Cooke prefaces the mention of his calling on "the Doctor" the second morning after the *Deserted Village* was begun, by an account of the Doctor's slowness in writing poetry, "not from the tardiness of fancy, but the time he took in pointing the sentiment and polishing the versifi-

¹ "I sincerely believe," he adds, "what I have written; I have taken all possible pains, in my country excursions for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege; and all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real which I here attempt to display."

² *European Magazine*, xxiv. 172.

cation." An invaluable hint to the poetical aspirant, as already I have strongly urged. Indisputable wealth of genius, flung about in careless exuberance, has as often failed to make a poet as one finished unsuperfluous masterpiece has succeeded, and kept a name in the Collections forever. Goldsmith's manner of writing the *Deserted Village*, his friend tells us, was this: he first sketched a part of his design in prose, in which he threw out his ideas as they occurred to him; he then sat down carefully to versify them, correct them, and add such other ideas as he thought better fitted to the subject; and if sometimes he would exceed his prose design by writing several verses impromptu, these he would take singular pains afterwards to revise, lest they should be found unconnected with his main design. Ten lines, from the fifth to the fifteenth, had been his second morning's work; and when Cooke entered his chamber he read them to him aloud:

"Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please—
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene;
How often have I paus'd on every charm—
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighboring hill,
The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade
For talking age and whispering lovers made."

"Come," he added, "let me tell you this is no bad morning's work; and now, my dear boy, if you are not better engaged, I should be glad to enjoy a shoemaker's holiday with you."

This proposed enjoyment is then described by Cooke, in a simple, characteristic way. "A shoemaker's holiday was a day of great festivity to poor Goldsmith, and was spent in the following innocent manner. Three or four of his intimate friends rendezvoused at his chambers to breakfast about ten o'clock in the morning; at eleven they proceeded to the City Road and through the fields to High-

bury Barn to dinner;¹ about six o'clock in the evening they adjourned to White Conduit House to drink tea; and concluded by supping at the "Grecian" or Temple Exchange coffee-house, or at the "Globe" in Fleet Street. There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and pastry kept at High-bury Barn about this time at tenpence per head, including a penny to the waiter; and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade. The whole expenses of the day's fête never exceeded a crown, and oftener were from three-and-sixpence to four shillings, for which the party obtained good air and exercise, good living, the example of simple manners, and good conversation."²

Truly, very innocent enjoyment, and shared not alone by Templars and small wits, but by humbler good fellows. One Peter Barlow, who acted now and then as a copyist

¹ The ordinary was at one—a primitive hour; but not very many years had passed since Cibber's Sir Charles Easy, the type of a man of fashion, dined habitually at two o'clock. The dinner-hour of the Club, when, in the year after Goldsmith's death, supper gave way to that more important repast, was half-past four.

² *European Magazine*, xxiv. 172. Skittles, it would seem, was a game in some vogue with the party; but remembering what Horace Walpole tells us of the Chatsworth of his day, that the old Duchess "staid every evening till it was dusk in the skittle-ground, keeping the score," we need not be greatly shocked at the "low" tastes of our hero. Besides these convivial social sports, one might almost infer, too, that he occasionally varied them with the "cheerful solitude" of a day's angling, such is the personal zest observable in the passage of the *Animated Nature* (v. 157) where the latter is referred to. "Happy England!" Goldsmith breaks out. "Where the sea furnishes an abundant and luxurious repast, and the fresh waters an innocent and harmless pastime; where the angler, in cheerful solitude, strolls by the edge of the stream, and fears neither the coiled snake nor the lurking crocodile; where he can retire at night, with his few trouts, to borrow the pretty description of old Walton, to some friendly cottage, where the landlady is good, and the daughter innocent and beautiful; where the room is cleanly, with lavender in the sheets, and twenty ballads stuck about the wall! There he can enjoy the company of a talkative brother sportsman, have his trouts dressed for supper, tell tales, sing old tunes, or make a catch! There he can talk of the wonders of Nature with learned admiration, or find some harmless sport to content him, and pass away a little time without offence to God or injury to man."

Peter Barlow

for Goldsmith—very poor, very proud in his way—who appeared always in one peculiar dress, who declared himself able to give only a specified small sum for his daily dinner, but who stood firmly on his ability to do this, and never permitted any one to do it for him—had made himself a great favorite with the poet by his honest independence and harmless eccentricity, and had generally a place in the shoemaker's holiday. If the dinner cost even five shillings each, fifteenpence was still the limit of Peter's responsibility; and the balance was privately paid by Goldsmith. Many, too, were his other pensioners, on less liberal terms than Peter. He had two or three poor authors always on his list, besides "several widows and poor housekeepers"; and when he had no money to give the latter he seldom failed to send them away with shirts or old clothes, sometimes with the whole contents of his breakfast table, saying, with a smile of satisfaction after they were gone: "Now let me only suppose I have eat a much heartier breakfast than usual, and I'm nothing out of pocket." Those who knew him best, exclaims Cooke, after relating some stories of this kind, can best speak in his praise. "He was so humane in his disposition that his last guinea was the general boundary of his munificence."¹

Yet Cooke was no enthusiast. He had rather, at the time these anecdotes were written, fallen into the Boswell way of talking of his old patron, and was careful to color his picture, as though to adapt it for popular acceptance, with all due tints of vanity and folly. Unable to conceal, indeed, the pains he is at in doing this, his examples are often very amusing failures. One day, for instance, he tells us, Goldsmith being in company where many ladies were, and a ballad-singer happening to sing his favorite air of "Sally Salisbury" under the window, his envy and vanity broke out, and he exclaimed, with some passion: "How miserably this woman sings!" "Pray, Doctor," rejoined the lady of the house, "could you do it better?" "Yes, madam," was the

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 261.

answer, amidst a general titter of distrust; "and the company shall be judges." He instantly began, when, adds Cooke, with a sort of naïve renewal of the wonder of the ladies, "singing with some ear and no inconsiderable degree of pathos, he obtained the universal suffrages of the company."¹ I have spoken of the harmless forms of miscalled vanity and envy which unconscious comparative criticism will sometimes breed, and surely this is but pleasant evidence of them. Nor did the narrator prove more successful when he professed to give instances of Goldsmith's folly. The poet of the *Pleasures of Memory*, interested in all that concerned the elder poet, whose style he made the model for his own finished writings, knew Cooke well in the latter days of his life,² and gives me curious illustration of the habit he then had fallen into when he spoke of his celebrated friend. "Sir," he said, on Mr. Rogers asking what Goldsmith really was in conversation, "he was a fool. The right word never came to him. If you gave him back a bad shilling, he'd say, 'Why, it's as good a shilling as ever was born.' You know he ought to have said *coined*. *Coined*, sir, never entered his head. He was a fool, sir."

It may be added, since the question of vanity and envy has again arisen here, that even Tom Davies, who talks more of his envious sallies than any one, tells us they were altogether childish, harmless, and absurd; that nothing but mirth was ever suggested by them; and that he never formed any scheme or joined in any combination to hurt any man living.³ A more important witness, too, gives yet more

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 261.

² Cooke survived till 1824, fully justifying what he always asserted, that he came of a long-lived family, his father having been actually a class-fellow with the youngest son of Dryden, and well remembering the funeral of the great poet.

³ *Life of Garrick*, ii. 168. It was at this time, according to Tom, that "his absurdities were so glaring, his whole conduct so contradictory to common-sense, and so opposite to what was expected from a man of his admirable genius, that a gentleman of strong discernment (Mr. Horace Walpole) characterized him by the name of the Inspired Idiot."—ii. 152. Nevertheless, Tom is good enough to admit: "As I have with great free-

interesting testimony. Bishop Percy, who of all his distinguished friends had known him earliest, after stating that he was generous in the extreme, that never was there a mind whose general feelings were more benevolent and friendly, and that, so strongly was he affected by compassion, he had been known at midnight to abandon his rest in order to procure relief and an asylum for a poor dying object who was left destitute in the streets, proceeds thus: "He is, however, supposed to have been often soured by jealousy or envy; and many little instances are mentioned of this tendency in his character: but whatever appeared of this kind was a mere momentary sensation, which he knew not how like other men to conceal. It was never the result of principle or the suggestion of reflection; it never embittered his heart nor influenced his conduct."¹ Let this emphatic language be the comment on any future record of such "little instances"; and when Johnson ridicules hereafter his friend's ignorance of things, let it be taken with Cooke's odd illustration of his supposed ignorance of words.

dom exposed his faults, I should not have dwelt so minutely upon them if I had not been conscious that upon a just balance of his good and bad qualities, the former would far outweigh the latter. Goldsmith was so sincere a man that he could not conceal what was uppermost in his mind; and no man was ever very mischievous whose errors excited mirth."—ii. 167–168. I may add that Walpole's expression of "inspired idiot," being repeated in Forbes's *Life of Beattie*, elicits from Mrs. Piozzi, among the MS. notes of her old age on the margin of the copy before named (vol. iii. 83), an emphatic "very true."

¹ *Percy Memoir*, 117. Beyond a doubt this was written by the Bishop himself. But, as if it were impossible to let even such an avowal stand uncoupled with something of depreciation, the writer adds: "Nothing could be more amiable than the general features of his mind; those of his person were not, perhaps, so engaging."

CHAPTER III

THE EDGWARE COTTAGE, ST. STEPHEN'S, AND GRUB STREET

1768

HENRY GOLDSMITH'S death would seem to have been made known to his brother Oliver shortly before we discover the latter to have gone for a summer retreat into a cottage eight miles down the Edgware Road, "at the back of Canons." He had taken it in connection with his neighbor in the Temple, Mr. Bott; and they kept it for some little time. It was very small, and very absurdly decorated; and, as a set-off to his shoemaker's holiday, he used to call this his Shoemaker's Paradise, one of that craft having built it, and laid it out with flying Mercuries, *jets d'eau*, and other preposterous ornaments,¹ though the ground it stood upon, with its two rooms on a floor, its garden and all, covered considerably less than half an acre. The friends would occasionally drive down to this retreat, even after dining in London, good-natured Mr. Bott being also one of those respectable men who kept a horse and gig: and a curious letter is said to be in existence written by Goldsmith shortly before his death, thanking him again and again for timely pecuniary help rendered in his worst straits; saying it is to Bott he entirely owes that he can sit down in safety in his chambers without the terrors of arrest hanging momentarily over him; and recalling such whimsical scenes of past days as when they used to drive down the Edgware Road at night, and, both their necks being brought to imminent peril by the gig's descent into a ditch, the driver (Bott) would ex-

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 94.

haust all his professional eloquence to prove that at that instant they were exactly in the centre of the road.¹

Here the *History of Rome*, undertaken for Davies, was at leisure proceeded with; here the new poem, worked at in the adjoining lanes and in pleasant strolls along the shady hedges, began to grow in importance; here, thus tuning his exquisite song outside the bars of his London prison, he might with himself enjoy that sense of liberty for which it so delighted him to listen to the songs of other uncaged birds;² and here, so engaged, Goldsmith seems to have passed the greater part of the summer, apparently not much moved by what was going on else-

¹ See *Percy Memoir*, 112, note.

² See vol. ii. 131. I will here add, as a supplement to the exquisite passage there quoted from the *Animated Nature*, another, hardly less pleasing (iv. 260), on the Robin Redbreast. Goldsmith is talking of the sagacity of the nightingale, which, however, he seems to doubt; and continues: "It is but to have high reputation for any one quality, and the world is ready enough to give us fame for others to which we have very small pretensions. But there is a little bird rather celebrated for its affection to mankind than its singing, which however, in our climate, has the sweetest note of all others. The reader already perceives that I mean the Redbreast, the well-known friend of man, that is found in every hedge, and makes it vocal. The note of other birds is louder, and their inflections more capricious; but this bird's voice is soft, tender, and well supported; and the more to be valued as we enjoy it the greatest part of the winter. If the nightingale's song has been compared to the fiddle, the redbreast's voice has all the delicacy of the flute." I take the opportunity of adding, as well for the mere pleasure of transcribing the lines as that the reader should see them here, that stanza on the redbreast which Gray expunged from the *Elegy*, and which made Lord Byron wonder that he could have had the heart to do it.

"Here scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found,
The redbreast loves to build and warble here,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground."

Two most charming lines I am tempted to add to these, because neither are they to be found in the ordinary editions of Gray's poems. They were made by Mr. Gray, says Nichols (*Works*, v. 34), as we were walking in the spring in the neighborhood of Cambridge.

"There pipes the wood-lark, and the song-thrush there
Scatters his loose notes in the waste of air."

where. Walpole, mourning for the loss of his Lady Hervey and his Lady Suffolk, was reading his tragedy of the "Mysterious Mother" to his lady friends who remained, and rejoicing that he did not need to expose himself to "the impertinences of that jackanapes Garrick, who lets nothing appear but his own wretched stuff, or that of creatures still duller, who suffer him to alter their pieces as he pleases;"¹—but Goldsmith's withers are unwrung. Hume was receiving a considerable increase to his pension, with significant intimation of the royal wish that he should apply himself to the continuation of his *English History*; while great lords were fondly dandling Robertson into the good graces of the booksellers, the Chief Justice was admiringly telling the Duke of Bedford that £4500 was to be paid him for his *History of Charles the Fifth*, and Walpole was reasonably sneering at what Scotch puffing and partiality might do;²—but the humbler historian at Edgware pursues his labors unbribed and undisturbed. The *Sentimental Journey* was giving pleasure to not a few; even Walpole was declaring it "infinitely preferable to the tiresome *Tristram Shandy*"; while, within a few months, at a grand dinner-table round which were seated two dukes, two earls, Mr. Garrick, and Mr. Hume, a footman in attendance was announcing Sterne's lonely death in a common lodging-house in Bond Street;³—but Goldsmith does not

¹ *Coll. Lett.* v. 199. His audience consisted of Lady Aylesbury, Lady Lyttelton, and Miss Rich; his friend Conway assisting on the occasion.

² *Coll. Lett.* v. 223.

³ I quote from a curious volume based on facts undoubtedly authentic: "In the month of January, 1768, we set off for London. We stopped for some time at Almack's house, in Pall Mall. My master afterwards took Sir James Gray's house in Clifford Street, who was going ambassador to Spain. He now began housekeeping, hired a French cook, housemaid, and kitchen-maid, and kept a great deal of the best company. About this time, Mr. Sterne, the celebrated author, was taken ill at the silk-bag shop in Old Bond Street. He was sometimes called *Tristram Shandy*, and sometimes *Yorick*, a very great favorite of the gentlemen's. One day my master had company to dinner, who were speaking about him: the Duke of Roxburgh, the Earl of March, the Earl of Ossory, the Duke of Grafton, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Hume, and Mr. James. 'John,' said my

yet see the shadow of his own early decay. Gray, who had in vain solicited the Cambridge professorship of modern history¹ while he yet had the health it would have given him spirit to enjoy, and was now about to receive it from the Duke of Grafton when no longer able to hold it,² was wondering at a new book about Corsica in which he found a hero portrayed by a green goose, and where he had the comfort of feeling that what was wise in it must be true,

master, 'go and inquire how Mr. Sterne is to-day.' I went, returned, and said: 'I went to Mr. Sterne's lodging—the mistress opened the door—I enquired how he did. She told me to go up to the nurse; I went into the room, and he was just a-dying. I waited ten minutes; but in five, he said, "Now it is come!" He put up his hand as if to stop a blow, and died in a minute.' The gentlemen were all very sorry, and lamented him very much."—*The Life of a Footman; or, The Travels of James Macdonald*, 8vo. 1790. (1852.) I may now refer to Mr. Fitzgerald's very lively, interesting, and carefully written *Life of Sterne*, for the sad and shocking incident that closed this terrible tragedy. 1870.

¹ From Lord Bute. See Walpole's *Coll. Lett.* v. 342. "As this," says Mason, "was the only application Mr. Gray ever made to the ministry, I thought it necessary to insert his own account of it." His own account of it is in a letter to Dr. Warton (*Works*, iii. 301). After describing his application, to which he says he was "cockered and spirited up by some friends," he continues: "I received my answer very soon, which was what you may easily imagine, but joined with great professions of his *desire to serve me* on any future occasion, and many more fine words that I pass over, not out of modesty, but for another reason. So you see I have made my fortune, like Sir Fr. Wronghead." The tutor of Sir James Lowther, a great ministerial man, got the place. For the affecting expressions of gratitude with which Gray received at last the tardy gift which he enjoyed for so short a time, see *Works*, iv. 120–125. I ought, perhaps, to add that five years before his unsuccessful application to Lord Bute, the Duke of Devonshire (then Lord Chamberlain) offered him the office of Poet Laureate, at that time in very low esteem, which he respectfully had declined.—*Works*, iii. 186. And see *Correspondence with Mason*, 112–114.

² Poor Gray! even his quiet, scholarly life could not protect him from the scurrility of the time, from which Goldsmith so sorely suffered. "My friend Mr. Gray," says Walpole's friend Cole, "a man devoid of all ambitious views, because his friend, Mr. Stonehewer, had pointed him out as a most proper person to the Duke of Grafton for the professorship of modern history, without the least application or thought of it himself, met with the most illiberal abuse in the public papers," etc.—*Cole's MSS.* xxxii. 12. *Cavendish Debates*, i. 621. And see Wooll's *Warton*, 335–336.

for the writer was too great a fool to invent it;¹ but Goldsmith has never been much interested in Boswell, and Paoli is not very likely to increase his interest. Having made this unavailing effort to empty his head of Corsica, Boswell himself had visited London in the spring,² had followed Johnson to Oxford, and was now making him the hero of dinner-parties at the "Crown and Anchor" in the Strand, where Percy was quite unwarrantably attacked, Robertson slighted, and Davies turned into ridicule; but Goldsmith is doubtless well content, for a time, to escape his chance of being also "tossed and gored."³ Kindness he could not

¹ "When Boswell published his account of Corsica, I found Mr. Gray reading it. 'With this,' he said, 'I am much pleased, because I see that the author is too foolish to have invented it.'"—Nichols's *Reminiscences of Gray* (*Works* v. 47), one of the most charming papers, at once for fullness and brevity, ever contributed to our knowledge of a celebrated man. Of Boswell's *Corsica*, Gray expressed a similar opinion to Walpole (*Works*, iv. 113), and I quote the passage, because it so exactly hits at once the littleness and the greatness of Boswell, and, nearly twenty years before the masterpiece of English biography was written, shows us the possibility of a green goose doing justice to a hero. "Mr. Boswell's book I was going to recommend to you when I received your letter: it has pleased and moved me strangely, all (I mean) that relates to Paoli. He is a man born two thousand years after his time! The pamphlet proves what I have always maintained, that any fool may write a most valuable book by chance, if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with veracity. Of Mr. Boswell's truth I have not the least suspicion, because I am sure he could invent nothing of this kind. The true title of this part of his work is, a Dialogue between a Green-Goose and a Hero." February 25, 1768.

² It was now that Hume described him as "a young gentleman, very good-humored, very agreeable, and very mad."—Hume's *Private Correspondence*, 131. For two wonderfully ridiculous letters of Boswell's, written during his recent foreign tour to Andrew Mitchell, the English minister at Berlin, who was a great friend of old Auchinleck, and had been appealed to to check James's extravagances, see Mitchell's *Memoirs and Papers*, ii. 351-353. I may also add, with special reference to the "dinners" so abundantly mentioned in the text, what Wilkes some years later wrote of him (*Letters*, iv. 5). "The earth," says the patriot, describing a drought, "is as thirsty as Boswell, and as cracked in many places as he certainly is in one."

³ "When I called upon Dr. Johnson next morning, I found him highly satisfied with his colloquial prowess the preceding evening. 'Well,' said he, 'we had good talk.' BOSWELL: 'Yes, sir; you tossed and gored several persons.'"—*Boswell*, iii. 58.

escape so easily, if Reynolds had it in his gift. For this, too, was the year when the great painter, entering the little room where a party of his brother artists were in council over a plan for an Academy of Arts, was instantly, all of them rising to a man, saluted "President";¹ and the year had not closed before the royal patronage was obtained for the scheme, and that great institution was set on foot which has since so greatly flourished, yet has had no worthier or more famous entry on its records than the appointment of Samuel Johnson as its first Professor of Ancient Literature and of Oliver Goldsmith as its first Professor of History.

Whether the clamor of politics, noisiest when emptiest, failed meanwhile to make its way into the Shoemaker's Paradise may be more doubtful. A year of such profligate turmoil, perhaps, never degraded our English annals. The millennium of rioters as well as libellers seemed to have come. The abandoned recklessness of public men was seen reacting through all the grades of society; and in the mobs of Stepney Fields and St. George's were reflected the knaves and bullies of White's and St. James's. Having glanced at the causes that had made inevitable some such consequence, it only remains to state it. The election for a new Parliament, the old one dying of its seventh year in March, let loose every evil element; and Wilkes found his work half done before he threw himself into it. His defeat for London, his daring and successful attempt on Middlesex, his imprisonment pending the arguments on his outlawry (when Reynolds, an old friend, but one can hardly think a congenial one, seems to have dined with him),² the result of

¹ Northcote's *Life*, i. 166. Cunningham's *Life*, 256-258. The great movers in the project were Chambers, West, Cotes, and Moser; Reynolds at first holding himself aloof, from a doubt, not as his less friendly biographer somewhat unfairly alleges, that the countenance of the court would be wanting, but from a fear that the mistakes of "The Incorporated Society of Artists" might again be committed. It was after West had taken to him a proposed list of thirty members, and explained to him enough to show that the new society started from a basis of their own which might fairly be made to include all the higher objects of such an institution, that Reynolds consented to join.

² *Life* by Leslie and Taylor, i. 291.

those arguments, his election as alderman, and clumsy alternations of rage and fear in his opponents, confirmed him at last the representative of Liberty; and amid tumult, murder, and massacre, the sacred cap was put upon his head.¹ Mobs assembled round his prison to offer him help, and succeeded so far as to involve Scotch soldiers, and their ministerial employers and defenders, in the odium of having fired fatally upon unarmed men. The laws seemed to have lost their terror, the magistracy their means of enforcing them. In one part of London there was a riot of Irish coal-heavers which lasted nine hours, and in which eighteen persons were killed before the Guards arrived upon the scene. The merchant-sailors on the river, to the number of four thousand, rose for an increase of wages, and stopped outward-bound ships from sailing till their demands were compromised. The Thames watermen, to the best of their ability, followed the example; so did the journeymen hatters, with what assistance they could give to the general confusion; and a riot even of journeymen tailors threatened to be formidable till Sir John Fielding succeeded in quelling it. Walpole has connected these various disturbances with the "favorable Wilkes season," and tells us that in all of them was heard the cry of Liberty and its champion. Liberty by itself, to not a few of its advocates, had ceased to convey any meaning. "I take the Wilkes-and-liberty to inform you," wrote a witty merchant to his correspondents.²

¹ It is curious to mark the eagerness with which the French welcomed anything of this sort, little dreaming of what was in store for themselves. "2 Août, 1768. Il nous est venu d'Angleterre des mouchoirs à la Wilkes; ils sont d'une très belle toile. Au lieu de fleurs ils sont imprimés et contiennent la Lettre de ce prisonnier aux habitans du Comté de Middlesex. Il est représenté au milieu, une plume à la main."—Bachaumont, *Mém. Soc.* iv. 80. "I happened," says Watson, afterwards Bishop of Llandaff, in the *Anecdotes of his Life* (Ed. 1818), i. 55, "to be at Paris about that time" (1768-1769); "and the only question which I was asked by a Carthusian monk, who showed me his monastery, was, whether Monsieur Wilkes, or the King, had got the better?"

² *Coll. Lett.* v. 210. Wilkes used to tell with much glee that as he was accidentally walking behind an old lady, she saw his head upon a sign-

It was now that Whitefield put up prayers for Wilkes before his sermons; that Dukes were made to appear in front of their houses and drink his health; that city voters in a modest way of trade refused to give him their votes unless he'd take a gift of money as well, in one instance as much as £20;¹ and that the most notoriously stately and ceremonious of all the ambassadors (the Austrian) was tumbled out of his coach head over heels, to have his heels chalked with *Number 45*. In the midst of a Wilkes mob the new Parliament met. "Good God," cried the Duke of Grafton when the Duke of Richmond laughed at Lord Sandwich's proposition to send and see if the riots had ceased, "is it matter for laughter when mobs come to join the name of Wilkes with the sacred sound of Liberty!" The poor Duke saw none of the causes that had brought this about, nor dreamed of connecting them with the social disorganization all around him: with the seat of government in daily disorder, Ireland insurrectionary, the colonies on the eve of rebellion, and the Continent overbearing and arrogant; while, to himself, a woman or a horse-race was first in the duties of life; and his allies the Bedfords, "with each of them his three thousand a year and his three thousand bottles of claret and champagne,"² were insensate and reckless of disgrace.

post, and murmured, "He swings everywhere but where he ought." He passed her, turned round, and politely bowed.—*Wilkes's Letters*, i. 112.

¹ Other tradesmen sent him gifts in kind, of which he specially records one of *forty-five* dozen of candles from a chandler. An unknown and more wealthy patriot sent him 500 guineas in a handsomely embroidered purse. Apart from these strictly personal tributes, £20,000 was also raised by more general subscription for him. I might prolong the account indefinitely. See his *Letters*, i. 111. Lord Mahon quotes a letter of Franklin's to his son, dated 16th April, 1768. "I went last week to Winchester, and observed that for fifteen miles out of town there was scarce a door or window-shutter next the road unmarked" (with Wilkes and Liberty, and *Number 45*), "and this continued here and there quite to Winchester, which is sixty-four miles."—*History*, v. 193.

² *Coll. Lett.* v. 206. For excellent descriptions of these scenes, I may refer also to Walpole's *George the Third*, and the second volume of his *Letters to Mann*. Let me add that, waiving the question of whether or not

That language of Walpole is not to be adopted to its full extent it may be true, any more than the expressions of the more terrible assailant who was now, with such signatures as Mnemon, Lucius, and Atticus,¹ sharpening his nameless weapons for a more enduring aim; but in neither case is the desperate bitterness to be condemned as uncalled for, simply because it involved individual injustice. The time had come when, even at the expense of individual suffering, it was well that such things should be thought and said, and when it was fitting that public men, privately not unamiable or dishonest, should at length be made bitterly responsible for public wrongs, whether sanctioned or committed. Lord Chatham was no worshipper of the mob; but this year roused him from his apathy, and replumed his popular fame. He saw much of what at last was impending. In "timber-merchants," who began now to contest seats in the large cities against the Selwyns and men of the aristocratic families, he saw something more than Gilly Williams's "d—d carpenters" who (according to Lord Carlisle) should be "kept in their saw-pits." A new power was about to make itself felt, and it found Chatham prepared. He withdrew his name from the ministry, already reeling

Lord Bute still exercised personal influence at this time over the young King, which the letters I have lately quoted (vol. iii. 67) show at least to have been a belief entertained in other than "vulgar" quarters (*Memorials of Fox*, i. 111), it is quite certain that the system introduced by Lord Bute continued to hold undisputed sway, and that the scenes named in the text were but the natural fruit it bore. I will add that I know of no more painful or humiliating study than that of the various private papers and "Correspondences" of the great families who were the chief actors in these scenes, which during the last twenty or thirty years have been given to the world.

¹ The first known communication by the writer of "Junius" appeared in the *Public Advertiser* on the 28th of April, 1767; but the letters, sixty-nine in number, signed "Junius," and forming the collection with which every reader is familiar, extend only over the space from the 21st of January, 1769, to the 2d of November, 1771. The sixty-ninth letter, addressed to Lord Camden, is without a date; and there are other private letters to Woodfall, the printer of the *Public Advertiser*, the last two of which are dated 10th May, 1772, and 19th January, 1773.

under the storm of Wilkes; Shelburne soon after followed him; Camden was not long in following Shelburne; the poor Duke of Newcastle, inapt for new notions, sank into the grave with his old ones;¹ and young Charles James Fox, to whom the great friend and associate of his mature life was already intimately known, for the first time heard Mr. Burke familiarly talked about at his father's table.² The latter incident may mark what the great families found it now no longer possible to affect ignorance of; though it is just as likely that his purchase of an estate induced the talk as his late fiery speeches in the House of Commons. Burke became this year a landed proprietor. With money bequeathed him by his father and brother, and with large help from Lord Rockingham (at once intended to requite service and render it more effective), he purchased an estate in Buckinghamshire called Gregories, or Butler's Court, about a mile from the market-town of Beaconsfield, and subsequently known by the latter name.³ Assisted as he was, the effort must have straitened his means; for in the following year he asks a loan of a thousand pounds from Garrick,

¹ See Chesterfield's *Letters* (Ed. Lord Mahon), iv. 478-479.

² His father's first recorded remark upon the new man was highly characteristic. He supposed he was a wonderfully clever man; but (alluding to Burke's excessive practice of talking) "he did not like those clever fellows who could not plainly say *yes* or *no* to any question you asked them." — *Memorials of Fox*, i. 66. Lord Holland would thoroughly have appreciated Goldsmith's couplet:

"Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining."

³ He writes to Shackleton on the 1st of May, 1768: "Again elected on the same interest" (Lord Verney had again returned him for Wendover), "I have made a push, with all I could collect of my own, and the aid of my friends, to cast a little root in this country. I have purchased a house, with an estate of about six hundred acres of land, in Buckinghamshire, twenty-four miles from London, where I now am. It is a place exceedingly pleasant; and I propose (God willing) to become a farmer in good earnest. You, who are classical, will not be displeased to hear that it was formerly the seat of Waller the poet, whose house, or part of it, makes at present the farm-house within an hundred yards of me." — *Correspondence*, i. 153-154.

which his "dear David," his "dearest Garrick," at once accords.¹ The estate was twenty-four miles from London; and within a hundred yards of the house were the ruins of what had once been Edmund Waller's home. Gregories itself, consumed by fire, has since become a ruin; but nobler memories than the old poet's linger now round what had once been the home of Edmund Burke, and Goldsmith has his share in them.

Exciting news at the Edgware Cottage that Beaconsfield purchase at least must have been, even though the noise of Wilkes might have failed to force any entrance there. In October, Goldsmith was again in the Temple; and is to be traced at his old haunts and in the theatres. Somewhat later in the season that now began, Garrick brought out a new tragedy by Home, which its writer had called "Rivine"; but so hateful had Wilkes again made the Scotch that the author's name had to be suppressed, its own name to be anglicized, and a young Oxford gentleman to be brought up to the rehearsals to pass himself off as the writer.² Goldsmith discovered the trick, and is said by Davies to have proposed a hostile party against the play, not inaptly rechristened by Garrick the "Fatal Discovery." "It would hardly be credited that this man of benevolence—for such he really was—endeavored to muster a party to condemn it"; but this, the same authority afterwards remarks, "was the transient thought of a giddy man, who, upon the least check, would have immediately renounced it, and as heartily joined with a party to support the piece he had before devoted to destruction."³ If credit is to be given at all to so doubtful a statement, it was probably renewed spleen at Garrick, whose recent patronage of Kenrick, for no apparent reason than his means of mischief and his continued abuse of more successful men, had not tended to induce oblivion of older offences. Kenrick's lat-

¹ *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 353-354.

² See *Carlyle's Autobiography*, 509-510.

³ *Life of Garrick*, ii. 155, 168. And see Lord Campbell's *Chancellors*, vi. 85.

est form of malice was the epigram ; but in using it to connect Goldsmith's with other names now rife in the playbills the wit was much less apparent than the venom.

"What are your Britons, Romans, Grecians,
Compared with thoroughbred Milesians?
Step into Griffin's shop, he'll tell ye
Of Goldsmith, Bickerstaff, and Kelly. . . .
And take one Irish, evidence for t'other,
Ev'n Homer's self is but their foster-brother."

The last allusion was to a story the humbler wits were now telling against Goldsmith. Bickerstaff had invited a party to his house to hear one of his dramatic pieces read; and among the company were Goldsmith and one Paul Hiffernan, already mentioned as one of his Grub Street protégés, of the Purdon and Pilkington class. He was an eccentric, drunken, idle, Irish creature, educated for a physician and not without talents and even scholarship, but a continual victim to what he called *impecuniosity*, and so unprovided with self-help against the disease that he lived altogether upon the help of other people. *Where* he lived, however, nobody could ever find out: he gave his address at the "Bedford"; and beyond that curiosity was baffled, though many and most amusing were its attempts to discover more; nor was it until after his death that his whereabouts was found, in one of the wretched little courts out of St. Martin's Lane. He wrote newspaper paragraphs in the morning, foraged for his dinner, slept out the early part of the night in one of the theatres, and, in return for certain critical and convivial displays which made his company attractive after play-hours, was always sure of a closing entertainment at the "Black Lion" in Russell Street, or the "Cyder Cellar" in Maiden Lane.¹ Latterly he had taken

¹ I derive my account of this curious literary mortal from some papers by Cooke in the *European Magazine* (xxv. 110-115 and 179-184). Cooke incidentally remarks in the course of them, that one of Hiffernan's extraordinary and unaccountable publications (the *Philosophic Whim*) gave rise to "one of the last flashes of poor Goldsmith. 'How does this poor

altogether to dramatic criticism, for which he had some talent—his earliest Irish efforts in that line, when he ought to have been practising his profession, having been thought mighty pleasant by Burke, then a lad at Dublin University; and this, with its usual effect on the Drury Lane manager, had recently obtained him a sort of pension from Garrick. It was the great actor's worst weakness to involve himself thus with the meaner newspaper men; and it was only this very year he was warned, by a letter from Foote, of its danger in the case of Hiffernan. "Upon the whole," wrote that master in the art of literary libel, and there is nothing like the voice of a Gracchus for effective complaint against sedition, "it is, I think, worthy of consideration whether there is not something immoral, as well as impolitic, in encouraging a fellow, who, without parts, principles, property, or profession, has subsisted for these twenty years by the qualities of a literary footpad." Precisely that newspaper jobbery it was, however, to whose success the absence of parts, principles, property, and profession is essential, which had procured Hiffernan his invitation to the reading of Bickerstaff's play. A good dinner preluded the reading, and much justice was done to this, and to the glass which circulated half an hour afterwards, by "Hiff"; but his judgment, or enjoyment, of the play was much less clearly evinced, and when the first batch of opinions were collected at the end of the first act, "Very well, by —, very well!" was all that could be got from him. Alas for what followed! "About the middle of the second act," says the teller of the anecdote, "he began to nod; and in a little time afterwards, to snore so loud that the author could scarcely be heard. Bickerstaff felt a little embarrassed; but raising his voice, went on. Hiffernan's tones, however, also increased, till at last Goldsmith could hold out no longer, but cried out, 'Never mind the brute, Bick! go on.

devil of an author,' says a friend, 'contrive to get credit even with his bookseller for paper, print, or advertising?' 'Oh, my dear sir,' says Goldsmith, 'very easily—he steals the broom ready made.'"—*European Magazine*, xxv. 180.

So he would have served Homer if he was here and reading his own works.'"¹

Nothing could be easier for Kenrick than to turn this into a comparison of Bickerstaff to Homer; and no laugh was heartier than Garrick's at the new proof of Goldsmith's folly. But for his countenance of the libeller he was doomed to be severely punished, and in connection with this very Bickerstaff. Some four years after the present date that wretched man was driven from society with an infamous stain, and Kenrick grossly connected it by allusion with Garrick, to whom at the very time, as we now know, the miserable culprit was writing from his hiding-place the most piteous petitions for charity that one human being ever addressed to another.² An action was commenced

¹ *European Magazine*, xxv. 184. Nevertheless Hifferrnan, according to Cooke, made his own best excuse next day, and one which Goldsmith was ready enough to admit as such; for when the latter asked him how he could behave in that manner, the other coolly replied, "It's my usual way—I never *can* resist sleeping at a pantomime." The close of his life was of a piece with the rest of it. He was found dead in his garret.

² See letter in *Garrick Correspondence* (i. 473), written in French, dated "St. Malo, Juin 24, 1772," and endorsed by Garrick, "From that poor wretch, Bickerstaff. I could not answer it." After an interval of nearly five years Bickerstaff wrote again (ii. 208): "I am in the greatest distress; so great that words cannot express it. I remember that during the interval of my small prosperity I presented you at different times with some trifles; their value, I believe, might be about ten pounds: these would now feed and clothe me." In the same letter he refers to Kenrick, justly enough, as "the vilest miscreant that ever dishonored a pretension to literature, and for whom there should be a whip in the hand of every honest man to lash him out of human society." Yet to this wretched being, himself by his own misconduct lashed out of human society, the stage was indebted for several very pure and pleasing entertainments, among them "Love in a Village," "The Maid of the Mill," "Lionel and Clarissa," "The Spoiled Child," "The Padlock," etc.; and we have seen in the course of this narrative that such men as Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Foote, Murphy, and others, were indebted to him for occasional hospitality. "I closed with the offer of Mr. Garrick's friendship," says Murphy, persisting in one of his many querulous disputes with the manager of Drury Lane, "and dined with him and Dr. Johnson at Bickerstaff's house. After dinner the plays were mentioned. 'Prithee,' says Dr. Johnson, 'don't talk of plays; if you do, you will quarrel again.' He was a true prophet."—Murphy to Garrick, 13th January, 1773.—*Garrick*

against the libeller, and dropped upon ample apology.¹ "I did not believe him guilty, but did it to plague the fellow," said Kenrick to Thomas Evans. The worthy bookseller never spoke to him again.

Scoundrel as he was, it need not be denied that he had some cleverness. Johnson hit it off exactly when he described it as a faculty that made him *public* without making him *known*. He used to lecture at the "Devil" and other taverns, on every conceivable subject from Shakespeare to perpetual motion, which he thought he had discovered; having been, before he got his Scotch doctorship and became Griffiths's hack, a scale or rule maker. Hence Johnson's quiet answer to the attack on his *Shakespeare*, that he could not consider himself "bound by his rules"; and similar advice he always gave to Goldsmith, the next most frequent object of his attack. Nothing escaped this Ishmael of criticism, not even the *Traveller*. But "never mind, sir," Johnson would say at some new venom, as he said always of the fellow's outrages on himself, "a man whose business it is to be talked of is much helped by being attacked." He explained the reason afterwards to Boswell. "Fame, sir, is a shuttlecock: if it be struck only at one end of the room, it will soon fall to the ground; to keep it up, it must be struck at both ends." So too, on Boswell himself remarking, four years after the present, that he thought Goldsmith the better for the attacks so

Correspondence, i. 520. I may add that this miserable Bickerstaff case called forth a celebrated and admirable saying of Johnson's. Mrs. Piozzi tells us that "when Mr. Bickerstaff's flight confirmed the report of his guilt, and Mr. Thrale said, in answer to Johnson's astonishment, that he had long been a suspected man: 'By those who look close to the ground, dirt will be seen, sir,' was the lofty reply; 'I hope I see things from a greater distance.'"—Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 168. I quote a letter from Mr. Macready on this passage: "The 'Spoiled Child' was (I am pretty certain) not written by Bickerstaff. It was (the skeleton of it) drawn out by Ford—I think he was called Dr. Ford—with whom Mrs. Jordan first lived in London, and whom she left, on his declining to marry her, for the Duke of Clarence—saying, 'If I am to be a —, it will be better to be a prince's than a private person's.' Mrs. Jordan made up the fun of the piece, such as it is."

¹ See *Garrick Correspondence*, i. 477.

frequently made upon him: "Yes, sir," was the reply; "but he does not think so yet. When Goldsmith and I published each of us something at the same time,¹ we were given to understand that we might review each other. Goldsmith was for accepting the offer. I said, No, set reviewers at defiance."² Unhappily, his friend never could do this; and even the lesson of "retaliation" was learned by him too late. Kenrick remained, to the last, his evil genius; and it seems to have been with a sort of uneasy desire to propitiate him that Goldsmith yielded to Griffin's solicitation at the close of the present year, and consented to take part in the editing of a new *Gentleman's Journal* in which Kenrick was a leading writer, and for which Hiffernan, Kelly, and some others were engaged. It died soon after it was born; and, on some one remarking to Goldsmith what an extraordinary thing so sudden a death was, "Not at all, sir," he answered: "a very common case; it died of too many Doctors."³

An amusing illustration, which belongs nearly to this

¹ Johnson's allusion to his own writing must here mean the edition of *Shakespeare*, the *False Alarm*, or the *Falkland Islands* pamphlet; but as the two latter were very recent, it is most probable that the *Shakespeare* was meant; especially as Goldsmith, within a few months of its appearance, was also bringing out the *Traveller*, the *Essays*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and we know moreover that Johnson was writing reviews at this particular time for both the *Critical Review* and the *London Chronicle*.

² *Boswell*, iv. 306-307. v. 153. Johnson clinched his argument by a capital anecdote of old Bentley. "Why, they'll write you down," said somebody to the slashing old controversialist. "No, sir," he replied, "depend upon it, no man was ever written down but by himself." What he said in a letter to Mrs. Thrale is also much to the purpose. "Of the imitation of my style, in a criticism on Gray's Churchyard, I forgot to make mention. The author is, I believe, utterly unknown, for Mr. Steevens cannot hunt him out; I know little of it, for though it was sent me I never cut the leaves open. I had a letter with it representing it to me as my own work; in such an account to the publick there may be humor, but to myself it was neither serious nor comical. I suspect the writer to be wrong-headed; as to the noise which it makes, I have never heard it, and am inclined to believe that few attacks either of ridicule or invective make much noise but by the help of those they provoke."—*Piozzi Letters*, ii. 289.

³ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 492.

time, of inconveniences sometimes undergone from his Grub Street protégés and pensioners, will properly dismiss for the present this worshipful company of Kenricks and Hiffernans. The hero of the anecdote had all the worst qualities of the tribe; and "how do you think he served me?" said Goldsmith, relating the incident to a friend. "Why, sir, after staying away two years, he came one evening into my chambers, half drunk, as I was taking a glass of wine with Topham Beauclerc and General Ogleshorpe; and, sitting himself down, with most intolerable assurance inquired after my health and literary pursuits, as if we were upon the most friendly footing. I was at first so much ashamed of ever having known such a fellow that I stifled my resentment, and drew him into a conversation on such topics as I knew he could talk upon; in which, to do him justice, he acquitted himself very respectably; when all of a sudden, as if recollecting something, he pulled two papers out of his pocket, which he presented to me with great ceremony, saying, 'Here, my dear friend, is a quarter of a pound of tea and a half-pound of sugar I have brought you; for though it is not in my power at present to pay you the two guineas you so generously lent me, you, nor any man else, shall ever have it to say that I want gratitude.' This," added Goldsmith, "was too much. I could no longer keep in my feelings, but desired him to turn out of my chambers directly, which he very coolly did, taking up his tea and sugar; and I never saw him afterwards."¹ Certainly Hogarth should have survived to depict this scene. No less a pencil could have given us the fastidious face of Beauclerc, than whom no man ever showed a more uniform and even painful sense of the ridiculous when the screws of tea and sugar were produced!

Ogleshorpe was a recent acquaintance, and has become, by the compliment of Pope and in the page of Boswell, an

¹ *European Magazine*, xxiv. 260. Cooke says that Pilkington was the hero of this anecdote, which Goldsmith always told with extraordinary humor; but I doubt if Pilkington reappeared after the white mice. See vol. 52-53.

historical name. Now thirty years older than Goldsmith, he survived him upwards of eleven years;¹ and to the last preserved, not only that love of literature and genius which made him the first active patron of Johnson's *London* while yet the author was quite unknown, but that "strong benevolence of soul" which connects his memory with the colonization of Georgia, as well as those Jacobite leanings which involved him in a court-martial after the affair of '45, and subsequently shelved him as a soldier. He became a member of the House of Commons, sat in several Parliaments, compelled a reluctant inquiry into prisons and punishments, and distinguished himself as much by humane as by high-tory crotchets. The sympathies which attracted him to Goldsmith, and continued their intimacy, appear in the commencement of the only letter that survives of their correspondence. "How just, sir," writes Oglethorpe, "were your observations, that the poorest objects were by extreme poverty deprived of the benefit of hospitals erected for the relief of the poorest." And he encloses five pounds for his friend to distribute as he may think proper.² Nor were they without the other point of agreement which had attracted Oglethorpe to Johnson. Such associations as Goldsmith had brought from Ireland had disposed him less to the dominant race, of which by birth and breeding he was part, than to the cause of the native population. Thus,

¹ Though he served under Prince Eugene against the Turks, he only obtained his full rank as General a year or two before the present date (in 1765). In April, 1785, Walpole thus describes him: "General Oglethorpe, who sometimes visits me, and who is ninety-five, has the activity of youth when compared with me. His eyes, ears, articulation, limbs, and memory would suit a boy, if a boy could recollect a century backwards. His teeth are gone; he is a shadow, and a wrinkled one; but his spirits and his spirit are in full bloom; two years and a half ago he challenged a neighboring gentleman for trespassing on his manor."—*Letters to Mann*, iv. 218. On the other hand, see Madame d'Arblay's *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, ii. 274. Let me add that he read without spectacles to the last, and retained the use of his senses and his limbs, thus commemorated by Walpole, till he died. He had shot snipes in Conduit Mead, where Conduit Street and Bond Street now stand. See an agreeable notice of him in Lord Mahon's *History*, v. 73-75.

² *Percy Memoir*, 95-96.

though the social bearing of politics always interested him most, and he cared little at any time for its party questions, he had something of a half-fanciful Jacobite leaning; dabbled now and then in Jacobite opinions; and was as ready for a hit at the Hanoverian rat as Johnson himself. An anecdote of their stroll one day into Westminster Abbey has preserved for us pleasant record of this. They stood together in Poets' Corner; surveyed the dead but sceptred sovereigns that there, "from storied urn or animated bust," still rule and glorify the world; and the natural thought rose probably to the minds of both, "Perhaps our names, too, will one day be mingled with theirs." Johnson broke the silence, and whispered the hope in a Latin verse,

"Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis."

They walked away from the Abbey together, and arrived at Temple Bar, where the ghastly remains of the last Jacobite execution were still rotting on the spikes above; and where, till not long before, people had made a trade of letting spy-glasses at "a halfpenny a look." Here Goldsmith stopped Johnson, pointing up, and slyly returned his whisper,

"Forsitan et nostrum . . . miscebitur ISTRIS."¹

¹ *Boswell*, iii. 282.

CHAPTER IV

LABORS AND ENJOYMENTS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

1769

WITH the opening of 1769 we find Goldsmith busily engaged upon new projects, his *Roman History* being completed; and it was now, Percy tells us, that Johnson took him to Oxford and obtained for him the degree *ad eundem* of M.B.¹ The fact must rest on the Bishop's authority; for the present Oxford registrar, though "he inclines to believe that the Bishop of Dromore's impression was correct," finds a chasm in the University register, which leaves it without positive corroboration. They were at this time much together, it is certain; and if Johnson's opinion of the genius of Goldsmith was now at its highest, it was repaid with very hearty affection. "Look," said Gray, as in walking this year with a friend through a crowded street of the city he saw a large, uncouth figure "rolling" before them: "look, look, Bonstetten! the Great Bear! There goes *Ursa Major*!" It was Johnson.² "Ah!" said Goldsmith, when such expres-

¹ *Memoirs*, 36 (note). The wording of the passage might imply that Goldsmith himself was the authority. "In February, 1769, Dr. Goldsmith made an excursion to Oxford with Dr. Johnson, and was admitted in that celebrated university *ad eundem gradum*, which he said was that of M.B." Yet in the text of the *Memoir* the writer had just expressed it as doubtful whether he ever took any medical degree in a foreign university.

² Sir Egerton Brydges's *Autobiography*, ii. 111. For an interesting account of Bonstetten, who died in Geneva little more than forty years ago at the age of eighty-seven, and whom Brydges knew in that city as "a lively little man, with smooth, round, blooming cheeks," see the same volume, 378-399. If the anecdote related in the text be true, Boswell is wrong in supposing that his father, old Auchinleck, first applied the phrase to Johnson in 1773,

sions were repeated to him, "they may say that. Johnson, to be sure, has a roughness of manner, but no man alive has a more tender heart. He has nothing of the bear but his skin." Their entertainer at Oxford was the accomplished lawyer, Chambers, at this time Vinerian Professor, and five years later a judge in India, in whose rooms his more celebrated townsman, Scott (both were Newcastle men, and on the old panel of the grammar-school to which I went in my boyhood I remember cutting my name underneath theirs), was afterwards introduced to Johnson. Chambers had lately been admitted a member of the Gerrard Street club.

His election, with those of Percy and George Colman, took place on the resignation of Hawkins. The records of the early years of the club are really so scanty and imperfect that it is difficult to ascertain the simplest fact in connection with it; but it appears certain, as I formerly stated, that on the occasion of this second ballot for members it was resolved to enlarge the original number to twelve, when, as a result of the resignation of Hawkins, and of Beauclerc's forfeiture by continued non-attendance, four vacancies had to be filled. To the first Percy was elected; the second was reclaimed by Beauclerc, whose recent marriage with Lady Di Spencer on her divorce from Lord Bolingbroke sufficiently explained his temporary withdrawal;¹ and the third and fourth were filled by Chambers

"in a sly, abrupt expression to one of his brethren on the bench of the Court of Session in which Johnson was then standing" (v. 132-133), after that ever-famous discussion about the merits of Cromwell, which ended with the startling and unexpected exclamation that left the old judge decidedly victorious over Ursa Major: "God, doctor! he gart kings ken that they had a *lith* in their necks"—he taught kings they had a *joint* in their necks.

¹ "There is an affair broke out," writes Hume to the Countess de Boufflers, on the 27th November, 1767, "which makes a great noise, between Lady Bolingbroke and your friend Beauclerc. This lady was separated from her husband some time ago; but 'tis pretended bore a child lately to Mr. Beauclerc; and it is certain her husband has begun a process for her divorce, in which nobody doubts of his success. It is a great pity; she is handsome, and agreeable, and ingenious, far beyond the ordinary rate."—*Private Correspondence*, 251-252.

and George Colman.¹ It was on the occasion of this slight increase that Goldsmith seems to have urged the expediency of a larger infusion of new men. "It would give the club an agreeable variety," he thought; "there could now be nothing new among the members, for they had travelled over each other's minds."² This nettled Johnson, being too much in his own way. "Sir," he said, "you have not travelled over my mind, I promise you." Nevertheless, Reynolds agreed with Goldsmith, thinking that life wanted color and diversity as much as his own canvases did; and immediately before Goldsmith died the number was increased to twenty. But from that time Johnson took little interest in the meetings. Almost all the rising men of the day were Whigs, cursed Whigs, *bottomless* Whigs, as he prematurely called Burke; and the spectacle of Charles Fox in the chair quoting *Homer* and *Fielding* to the astonishment of Joe Warton, was one he could not get reconciled to.³ Within three years he was himself the advocate of a yet further increase to thirty; and the form the club then assumed was precisely what he wished to

¹ "I was received therein," says Percy (Nichols's *Illustrations*, vii. 311), "on Monday evening, 15th February, 1768; for at that time, and for several years, the club always met to sup and spend the evening every Monday during the winter and spring months." But for this decisive intimation I should have been disposed to think that the change had certainly been made before the first performance of the "Good-natured Man."

² Mrs. Piozzi gives the remark in her own way. "No man," she says, speaking of Johnson, "loved laughing better, and his vein of humor was rich, and apparently inexhaustible; though Dr. Goldsmith said once to him: 'We should change companions oftener; we exhaust one another, and shall soon be both of us worn out.' Poor Goldsmith was to him, indeed, like the earthen pot to the iron one in Fontaine's fables; it had been better for him, perhaps, that they had changed companions oftener; yet no experience of his antagonist's strength hindered him from continuing the contest. He used to remind me always of that verse in Berni;

'Il pover uomo che non sen' era accorto,
Andava combattendo—ed era morto.'

—*Anecdotes*, 178-179.

³ Letters of Boswell to Malone in appendix to Croker's *Boswell*, 839; and see vol. ii. 100-101.

bring it to: "a mere miscellaneous collection of conspicuous men, without any determinate character." So, to the present day, it has continued. It may be said to have ceased to be the Literary Club as soon as it became necessary for outsiders to call it so: and, though still *stat magni nominis umbra*, no effort has been made to revive its great, indeed its sole distinction.¹

Colman's election seemed a studied slight to Garrick, but his claim was not inconsiderable. It was a choice between rival managers and rival wits; eager little figures both; both social and most agreeable men;² and the scale was easily turned. Langton describes a club incident soon after Colman's admission. He says that Goldsmith, on

¹ "Some slight curiosities of literature may be gleaned from the records of the club. Since 1832, all the members present are wont, before they separate, to subscribe their names, but in previous years it was the presiding member only; and on one occasion, the 23d of April, 1793, when Boswell filled the chair, his signature appears most unlike his usual one, sprawling in blotted zigzags across the page, and clearly denoting one of those Bacchanalian excesses (confined, let us hope, to him singly) such as he relates of himself in the isle of Syke. In contrast with this too convivial scene may be mentioned one of solitary grandeur. On December 13th, 1825, the Earl of Liverpool, being then Prime Minister, resolved to dine at the club. By a singular chance, no other member happened to form the same purpose for that day, and thus Lord Liverpool passed the evening entirely alone. It appears from the books that the Prime Minister summoned to his aid one bottle of Madeira, of which, however, we may be sure that, according to his usual custom, he took but a very moderate share. 'This,' as a veteran and much-respected member writes to me, 'was the day of the great run on the London bankers, when Mr. Huskisson said that the whole financial transactions of England were within half an hour of being reduced to barter; and the Prime Minister of England being the only man who dined at the club on that day, is one of the most singular events that I know of in personal history.'"—Lord Mahon's *History*, vi. 315-316. A complete list of all the members, from its foundation up to the year 1835 (by no means correct, however, as to the dates of the respective elections), will be found in appendix to *Boswell*, ii. 326-329.

² The persons of both are thus hit off by Garrick, in a letter written when both were thoroughly pleased and satisfied with each other. "But humor, my dear Coly, and scenes that shall be all alive alive, ho, only proceed from men of small stature, whose eyes are either quite asleep or quite awake—in short, from men who laugh heartily and have small scars at the ends of their noses."—George Colman's *Posthumous Letters*, 256.

the occasion of a play brought out by Mrs. Lennox (a very ingenious, deserving, and not very fortunate woman, who wrote the clever novel of the *Female Quixote*, and a somewhat silly book about Shakespeare, to which Johnson, a great friend of her's, was suspected to have contributed), told Johnson at the club that a person had advised him to go and hiss it, because she had attacked the great poet in her book called *Shakespeare Illustrated*. "And did you not tell him," returned Johnson, sharply, "that he was a rascal?" "No, sir," said Goldsmith, "I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said." "Nay, sir," was the reply, "if he lied, it is a different thing." Colman was sitting by while this passed; and, dropping his voice out of Johnson's hearing, slyly remarked to Langton: "Then the proper expression should have been, *Sir, if you don't lie, you're a rascal.*"¹ The play was produced at Colman's theatre with the title of the "Sister," and encountered so strong an opposition that it was never repeated; but that the audience was not impartial may be suspected from Langton's anecdote, and it is borne out by a reading of the comedy itself. Though with too much sentiment, it is both amusing and interesting; and the Strawberry Hill critics who abused it, and afterwards pronounced Burgoyne's "Heiress" "the finest comedy in the English language," might have had the justice to discover that three of the characters of the fashionable General² were stolen from this very "Sister" of poor Mrs. Lennox. Goldsmith, however, had nothing to reproach himself with. He not only refrained from joining the dissentients, but assisted the comedy (perhaps first disposed to sympathize with it because Garrick had rejected it) by an epilogue writ-

¹ *Boswell*, vii. 358.

² In this remark I do not desire to detract from the real merit of a very pleasant comedy by an agreeable man, though I cannot quite agree in what is said of it either by Walpole or Horne Tooke, who, in his *Diversions of Purley*, calls it (412), "one little morsel of false moral excepted, the most perfect and meritorious comedy, without exception, of any on our stage."

ten in his liveliest strain, and spoken by pretty Mrs. Bulkley.

Goldsmith has had few competitors in that style of writing. His prologues and epilogues are the perfection of the *vers de société*. Formality and ill-humor are exorcised by their cordial wit, which transforms the theatre to a drawing-room and the audience into friendly guests. There is a playful touch, an easy, airy elegance, which, when joined to terseness of expression, sets it off with a finished beauty and incomparable grace; but few of our English poets have written this style successfully. The French, who invented the name for it, have been almost its only practised cultivators. Goldsmith's genius for it will nevertheless bear comparison with even theirs. He could be playful without childishness, humorous without coarseness, and sharply satirical without a particle of anger. Enough remains, for proof, in his collected verse; but in private letters that have perished many most charming specimens have undoubtedly been lost. For with such enchanting facility it flowed from him that with hardly any of his friends in the higher social circles which he now began to enter did it fail to help him to a more gracious acceptance, to warmer and more cordial intimacy. It takes but the touch of nature to please highest and lowest alike; and, whether he thanked Lord Clare or the manager of Ranelagh, answered an invitation to the charming Miss Hornecks, or supplied author or actor with an epilogue, the same exquisite tact, the same natural art, the same finished beauty of humor and refinement, recommended themselves to all.

The Miss Hornecks, girls of nineteen and seventeen, were acquaintances made during this year; and they soon ripened into friends. They were the daughters of Mrs. Horneck, Captain Kane Horneck's widow, whose Devonshire family had connected her with Reynolds, and so introduced her to Goldsmith. Her only son Charles, the "Captain in Lace," as they now fondly called him, had entered the Guards in the preceding year, and seems to have been as cordial and good-natured as her daughters were handsome and young.

The elder, Catherine, "Little Comedy" she was called, was already engaged to Henry William Bunbury (second son of a baronet of old family in Suffolk, whose elder son Charles had lately succeeded to the title), who is still remembered as "Geoffrey Gambado," and one of the cleverest amateur artists and social caricaturists of his day. The youngest, Mary, had no declared lover until a year after Goldsmith's death, nor was married until three years after that engagement to Colonel Gwyn; but already she had the loving nickname of the "Jessamy Bride," and exerted strange fascination over Goldsmith. Heaven knows what impossible dreams may at times have visited the awkward, unattractive man of letters!¹ But, whether at any time aspiring to other regard than his genius and his simplicity might claim, at least for these the sisters heartily liked him; and perhaps the happiest hours of the later years of his life

¹ This hint was first thrown out by me; but Mr. Washington Irving, who has done me the honor to copy it and many other things from the first edition of this biography, goes somewhat too far in accepting the suggestion as if it were an ascertained fact, and proceeding to install the "Jessamy Bride" in all the honors of a complete conquest of Goldsmith, which, as he tells his readers (*Life of Goldsmith*, 370), "has hung a poetical wreath above her grave." In Mr. Irving's little book, the "Jessamy Bride" becomes the very centre of all Goldsmith's hopes and thoughts in latter life. If there is a dance, the Jessamy Bride must, of course, be his "partner" (308); if there is an expensive suit of clothes, it is to "win favor in the eyes of the Jessamy Bride" (228); if there is an additional extravagance of wardrobe, "the bright eyes of the Jessamy Bride" are made responsible for it (255); if he cannot resist an invitation of Mr. Bunbury's, it is "especially as the Jessamy Bride would, of course, be among the guests" (275); if "a blue velvet suit" makes sudden appearance in Mr. Filby's bills, "again we hold the Jessamy Bride responsible for this splendor of wardrobe" (304); if she attends a rehearsal of one of his comedies, it is the Jessamy Bride's presence that "may have contributed to flutter the anxious heart of the author" (312); as death approaches, "the Jessamy Bride has beamed her last smiles upon the poor poet" (360); and when all is over, a simple request of Mrs. Bunbury and her sister for a memorial of their pleasant friend, hereafter to be recorded, is turned into "the enthusiasm" of "one mourner" for his memory, "the Jessamy Bride's," which "might have soothed the bitterness of death" (369). This is running down a suggestion indeed!—and, with whatever success for romance-loving readers, less pleasantly, it must be admitted, for sober seekers after truth.

were passed in their society. Burke, who was their guardian, tenderly remembered in his premature old age the delight they had given him from their childhood;¹ their social as well as personal charms are uniformly spoken of by all; and when Hazlitt met the younger sister in Northcote's painting-room some forty-three years ago (she survived "Little Comedy" upwards of forty years, and died not more than thirty years since), she was still talking of her favorite Dr. Goldsmith, with recollection and affection unabated by age. Still, too, she was beautiful, beautiful even in years. The Graces had triumphed over Time. "I could almost fancy the shade of Goldsmith in the room," says Hazlitt, "looking round with complacency."

Soon had the acquaintance become a friendship. To a dinner-party given this year by their mother's friend and Reynolds's physician, Dr. (afterwards Sir George) Baker, the sisters appear at the last moment to have taken on themselves to write a joint invitation to Goldsmith, to which he replied with some score of humorous couplets, at the top of which was scrawled, "This *is* a poem! This *is* a copy of verses!"

"Your mandate I got,
You may all go to pot;
Had your senses been right,
You'd have sent before night;
As I hope to be saved,
I put off being shaved;
For I could not make bold,
While the matter was cold,

¹ From Beaconsfield on the 1st of February, 1792, we thus find Burke writing to Mrs. Gwyn: "Your approbation of anything I do is a satisfaction I feel very sensibly. From your childhood I have admired your heart, and had a very good opinion of your judgment; and wished you all manner of happiness with an affection which might without violence be called paternal." In the same letter he speaks of the "very declining way" of "our old friend, that great ornament of his country and delight of society, Sir Joshua Reynolds."—*Hanbury Correspondence*, 400-401. Burke (with his cousin William) was trustee under the will of Capt. Kane Horneck, the father of the young ladies; and seems to have become involved in disputes respecting the administration of the trust.

² *Conversations of Northcote*, 95. Mrs. Gwyn died in 1840, within a few days of the completion of her eighty-eighth year.

To meddle in suds,
 Or to put on my duds;
 So tell Horneck and Nesbitt,
 And Baker and his bit,
 And Kauffman beside,
 And the Jessamy Bride,
 With the rest of the crew,
 The Reynoldses two,
 Little Comedy's face,
 And the Captain in Lace—
 (By-the-by, you may tell him,
 I have something to sell him;
 Of use I insist,
 When he comes to enlist.
 Your worships must know
 That a few days ago,
 An order went out,
 For the foot-guards so stout
 To wear tails in high taste,
 Twelve inches at least:
 Now I've got him a scale
 To measure each tail,
 To lengthen a short tail,
 And a long one to curtail.)—
 Yet how can I, when vexed,
 Thus stray from my text?
 Tell each other to rue
 Your Devonshire crew.
 For sending so late
 To one of my state.
 But 'tis Reynolds's way
 From wisdom to stray,
 And Angelica's whim
 To be frolick like him;

But, alas! your good worships, how could they be wiser,
 When both have been spoil'd in to-day's *Advertiser*?¹

¹ *Miscellaneous Works*, iv. 132-133. The *Advertiser's* compliment ran thus:

“While fair Angelica, with matchless grace,
 Paints Conway's lovely form and Stanhope's face;
 Our hearts to beauty willing homage pay,
 We praise, admire, and gaze our souls away.
 But when the likeness she hath done for thee,
 O Reynolds! with astonishment we see,
 Forced to submit, with all our pride we own,
 Such strength, such harmony excell'd by none,
 And thou art rivall'd by thyself alone.”

Does not this lifelike humor refurnish the hospitable table, reanimate the pleasant circle around it, and set us down again with Reynolds and his Angelica? The most celebrated of the women painters had found no jealousy in the leading artist of England. His was the first portrait that made Angelica Kauffman famous here; to him she owed her introduction to the Conways and Stanhopes; he befriended her in the misery of her first thoughtless marriage, now not many months dissolved, though himself (it was said) not unmoved by tenderer thoughts than of friendship; and he placed her in the list of the members of the new Academy. It was little wonder that their names should have passed together into print, and become a theme for the poet's corner of the *Advertiser*.

In the same number of that journal appeared an advertisement of the *Roman History*, which had been first announced in the preceding August, and was issued in the May of the present year. It was in two octavo volumes of five hundred pages each, was described as for the use of schools and colleges, and obtained at once a very large sale. What Goldsmith has given as his reason for writing it, that other histories of the "period were either too voluminous for common use, or too meanly written to please," will suffice also to explain its success. It was a compact and not a big book, and it was charmingly written. The critics received it well; and one of them had the grace to regret that "the author of one of the best poems that has appeared since those of Mr. Pope should not apply wholly to works of imagination." Johnson thought, on the other hand, that the writer's time had been occupied worthily; and when, a year or two after this, in a dinner conversation at Topham Beauclerc's, he was putting Goldsmith in the first class not only as poet and comic writer but also as historian, and Boswell exploded a protest in behalf of the Scotch writers of history, Johnson more decisively roared out his preference for his friend over "the verbiage of Robertson and the foppery of Dalrymple." Hume he had never read, because of his infidelity; but Robertson, he pro-

Angelica Kauffman

tested, might have put twice as much into his book as he had done, whereas Goldsmith had put into his as much as the book would hold.¹ This, he affirmed, was the great art: for the man who tells the world shortly what it wants to know, will, with his plain, full narrative, please again and again; while the more cumbrous writer, still interposing *himself* before what you wish to know, is crushed with his own weight and buried under his own ornaments. "Goldsmith's abridgment," he added, "is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius; and I will venture to say that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the *Roman History*, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying everything he has to say in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a *Natural History*, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale."

For this *Natural History* the first agreement dates as early as the close of February in the present year, five years before it was completed and published. It is made between Griffin and Goldsmith; and stipulates that the history is to be in eight volumes, each containing "from twenty-five to

¹ "BOSWELL: 'Will you not admit the superiority of Robertson, in whose History we find such penetration, such painting?' JOHNSON: 'Sir, you must consider how that penetration and that painting are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw draws from fancy. Robertson paints minds as Sir Joshua paints faces in a history-piece: he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as a romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, sir, it is the great excellence of a writer to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his History. Now, Robertson might have put twice as much into his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool: the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, sir; I always thought Robertson would be crushed by his own weight—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know: Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a second time; but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils: 'Read over your compositions, and whenever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out.'"—Boswell, iii. 280-281.

twenty-seven sheets of pica print"; that for each a hundred guineas are to be paid on its delivery in manuscript; that for this consideration the author is to make over all his right and title to, and in, the copy; that "Dr. Goldsmith is to set about the work immediately, and to finish the whole as soon as he conveniently can"; and that (this is put as a rider to the agreement, with fresh signatures) "if the work makes less than eight volumes the Doctor is to be paid in proportion." Soon after the memorandum thus drawn up the book was begun, but it was worked at in occasional intervals only; for, when the first month's sale of the *Roman History* had established its success, Davies tempted him with an offer of five hundred pounds for a *History of England*, in four volumes, to be "written and compiled in the space of two years" from the date of the agreement, but not to be paid for until delivered and the printer had given his opinion that the quantity of matter stipulated for was complete;¹ and this later labor superseded that of the earlier contract. There is no reason to believe that any money was advanced on the *English History*; and the preservation of the specific agreement enables us to test the truth of one of

¹ The agreement, dated 13th of June, 1769, is printed in the *Percy Memoir*, 78, with the particular mention that both this and a subsequent one, also with Davies, for abridgment of the *Roman History*, "were drawn up by Dr. Goldsmith himself." This fact induces me to subjoin them, if only to preserve such examples of his business style! The first runs thus: "MEMORANDUM. Russell Street, Covent Garden. It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M.B., on the one hand, and Thomas Davies, bookseller, of Russell Street, Covent Garden, on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith shall write for Thomas Davies an History of England, from the birth of the British Empire to the death of George the Second, in four volumes, octavo, of the size and the letter of the Roman History written by Oliver Goldsmith. The said History of England shall be written and compiled in the space of two years from the date hereof. And when the said history is written and delivered in manuscript, the printer giving his opinion that the quantity above mentioned is completed, that then Oliver Goldsmith shall be paid by Thomas Davies the sum of five hundred pounds sterling for having written and compiled the same. It is agreed also that Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work. In witness whereof we have set our names this thirteenth of June, 1769. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. THOMAS DAVIES." For the abridged History the subjoined was the pre-

Miss Hawkins's most delicate anecdotes. She says that soon after Goldsmith had contracted with the booksellers for this particular compilation, for which he was to be paid five hundred guineas, he went to Mr. Cadell and told him he was in immediate danger of being arrested; that Cadell immediately called a meeting of the proprietors, and prevailed on them to advance him a considerable part of the sum, which, by the original agreement, he was not entitled to till after a twelvemonth from the publication of his work; and that, on a day which Mr. Cadell had named for giving the needy author an answer, Goldsmith came and received the money, under pretence of instantly satisfying his creditors; whereupon Cadell, to discover the truth of his pretext, watched whither he went, and after following him to Hyde Park Corner, saw him get into a post-chaise, "in which a woman of the town was waiting for him, and with whom, it afterwards appeared, he went to Bath to dissipate what he had thus fraudulently obtained."¹ It has been seen that Cadell had nothing to do with the matter; and it may be presumed that the good-natured lady's other facts rest on as slender a foundation.²

On her authority, if it be received at all, must also be received another anecdote which is meant for a companion-piece to the sketch of dissipation just given. On one of his country excursions in that kind of company, the lady tells us, Goldsmith happened to stop at an inn on the road, where he found an old portrait hanging up in the parlor, which

pared "MEMORANDUM. September 15, 1770. It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M.B., and Thomas Davies, of Covent Garden, bookseller, that Oliver Goldsmith shall abridge for Thomas Davies the book entitled Goldsmith's Roman History, in two volumes 8vo, into one volume in 12mo, so as to fit it for the use of such as will not be at the expense of that in 8vo. For the abridging of the said history and for putting his name thereto, said Thomas Davies shall pay Oliver Goldsmith fifty guineas, to be paid him on the abridgment and delivery of the copy: as witness our hands. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. THOMAS DAVIES."

¹ *Memoirs*, i. 296.

² Cadell became subsequently the owner of a part of this copyright, as the assignee of Davies; but the fact does not vitiate the argument in the text.

seemed to him so admirably painted that he suspected it at once to be a Vandyke, and resolved to become possessed of it if he could. He summoned the mistress of the house, asked her if she set any value on that old-fashioned picture, and, finding that she was wholly a stranger to its worth, told her it bore really such a great resemblance to his dear aunt Salisbury (picking up on the instant Mrs. Thrale's maiden name) that if she would sell it cheap he would buy it. A bargain was struck, a price infinitely below the value was paid, Goldsmith carried away the picture with him, and, adds the amiable relater of the story (who alleges for it, I should remark, the authority of Mr. Langton), "had the satisfaction to find that by this scandalous trick he had, indeed, procured a genuine and very salable painting of Vandyke's."¹ It is hardly worth while to remark of the incident thus narrated, that, even if its main facts were true (which, if we are to believe Northcote's evidence as to Goldsmith's ignorance of painting, backed by his own in the dedication of the *Deserted Village*, they could hardly have been), it takes its character and color from the narrator; and that if the mere purchase of a picture at a price greatly below its worth must be held to involve a scandalous trick, for as to the romance about aunt Salisbury it is not credible for a moment, a very long list, indeed, of extremely scandalous tricksters might be named, from Swift² upwards and downwards, on whom much hitherto hoarded indignation should straightway be poured. It is to be feared, therefore, that the dissipation-piece is, on the whole, to be regarded as the more characteristic of the two.

Indeed, it would be idle to deny the charge of dissipation altogether. It is clear that with the present year he

¹ *Memoirs*, i. 295.

² "I was to-day at an auction of pictures with Pratt, and laid out two pounds five shillings for a picture of Titian, and if it were a Titian it would be worth twice as many pounds. (!) If I am cheated, I'll part with it to Lord Masham; if it be a bargain, I'll keep it to myself. That's my conscience."—*Journal to Stella*, Works, iii. 126.

passed into habits of needless expense;¹ used the influence of a popularity which was never higher than now, to obtain means for their thoughtless indulgence; and involved himself in the responsibilities which at last overwhelmed him. He exchanged his simple habits, says Cooke, for those of the great; he commenced quite a man of lettered ease and consequence; he was obliged to run into debt; "and his debts rendered him at times so melancholy and dejected that I am sure he felt himself a very unhappy man."² One of these sad involvements occurred in the autumn, when, it is supposed, being pressed for some portion of the loan expended on his chambers, he exacted from Griffin an advance of five hundred guineas for the first five volumes of the *Natural History*, which the bookseller was obliged to make up by disposing of half a share to another bookseller

¹ There are no years when, according to Reynolds's engagement-books, his dinners with Goldsmith were so frequent as in this and the following. "The Hornecks, Dr. Goldsmith, and Wilkes *very often*," is the remark of his biographer (i. 326), who adds (363): "He seems at this time to have dined oftener with Goldsmith than with any one else," and says in a later passage (381), "A very frequently recurring employment of Sir Joshua's Monday evenings, about this time (1770-1771), is a dinner at four, often with Goldsmith; then the Academy lecture at half-past five, followed by a council-meeting at seven, and after that an adjournment to the club." I will add what is said by Reynolds's biographer, with quotation from another of his note-books, in illustration of my mention, at the close of this biography, of the outcast girls whom Goldsmith befriended. "I believe Reynolds to have been the confidant of some at least of those sorrowful cases, and to have helped to relieve them. So at least I explain the first entry on a fly-leaf of the pocket-book for 1771, which runs: 'Goldsmith's girl; Mrs. Quarrington; inquire for Mrs. Jones at Mrs. Sneyd's, Tibbald's Row, Red Lion Street. Mrs. Hartley, Little James Street, Haymarket, at Mr. Kelly's.' These are all models. One of Goldsmith's outcast protégées had, I imagine, been employed as a model on his recommendation."—*Life*, ii. 71.

² Yet the old habits remained. "I have heard Sir Joshua remark of him, in times of his greatest distress, he was often obliged to supplicate a friend for the loan of ten pounds for his immediate relief; yet if by accident a distressed petitioner told him a piteous tale, nay, if a subscription for any folly was proposed to him, he, without any thought of his own poverty, would, with an air of generosity, freely bestow on the person who solicited for it the very loan he had himself but just before obtained."—Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i. 288.

(Mr. Nourse), and which Goldsmith had wholly expended before half a dozen chapters were written. For he had laid the subject aside to go on with his *English History*; though not unwarned of the unpopularity the latter might involve him in, so mad was the excitement of the time. Would he be a Hume or a Mrs. Macauley? He would be neither, he said; he objected equally to both.

Against party it is certain that Goldsmith always set himself. "I fly from petty tyrants to the throne." He has, at the same time, been careful to tell us that he did this upon principle, and not from "empty notions of divine or hereditary right." In the preface to his *History*, where that expression occurs, he takes occasion to object to the opinions put forth by Hume respecting government as "sometimes reprehensible," and to declare, for his own part, that when at any time he had felt a leaning towards monarchy it had been suggested by the consideration that a king, being but one man, may easily be restrained from doing wrong, whereas, if a number of the great are permitted to divide authority, who can punish them if they abuse it? An error is involved in this reasoning not inexcusable, I hope, by those who have read the sketches of party given in this narrative; but at least it suffices to show us why, on the particular theme, Goldsmith joined Johnson against Burke, though he differed from Johnson in this, that in real truth he went with neither faction.

Yet surely, if ever even faction, as against itself, could be invested with a something manly and defensible, it was now. The most thoughtful, the most retired, the least excitable of men, were suddenly aroused to some interest in it. A friend of Gray relates that he had an appointment to meet the poet at his lodgings in Jermyn Street, and found him so deeply plunged in the columns of a newspaper, which with his dinner had been sent him from a neighboring tavern, that his attention was with difficulty drawn from it. "Take this," said he, in a tone of excitement; "here is such writing as I never before saw in a

newspaper.”¹ It was the first letter with the signature of “Junius.” But it was not what now we must associate with “Junius”; not the reckless calumnies and scandals, not the personal spites and hatreds; not such halting liberalism as his approval of the taxation of America, and his protest against the disfranchisement of Old Sarum, which then so completely seized upon the reason as well as the tempers of men. It was the startling manifestation of power and courage; it was the sense that unscrupulous ministers had now an enemy as unscrupulous; that here was knowledge of even the worst chicaneries of office, which not the most sneering official could make light of; that no minister in either house, no courtier at St. James’s, no obsequious judge at Westminster, no supercilious secretary in any of the departments, could hereafter feel *himself* safe from treachery and betrayal; and that what hitherto had been only a vulgar, half-articulate cry from the Brentford hustings, or at best a faint whisper echoed from St. Stephen’s, was now made the property and enjoyment of every section of the people—of the educated by its exquisite polish, of the vulgar by its relish of malice, of the great middle-class by its animated plainness, vigorous shrewdness, and dogged perseverance. “*I will be heard*,” cried Burke in the House of Commons, in the course of what he wittily called the fifth act of the tragi-comedy acted by his Majesty’s servants for the benefit of Mr. Wilkes at the expense of the constitution—“*I will be heard. I will throw open those doors, and tell the people of England that when a man is addressing the chair on their behalf the attention of the Speaker is engaged.*” But “great noise” of members talking proved too much for even that impetuous spirit; he was *not* heard; nor, until the publication of Sir Henry Cavendish’s *Notes* a dozen years since, had the English people any detailed means of knowing what had passed during the most excit-

¹ This account is from Sir Egerton Brydges. Mr. Nichols merely says: “One day when I entered his apartment I found him absorbed in reading the newspaper. This was the first letter which appeared of ‘Junius.’” —*Works*, v. 51.

ing debates ever known within their House.¹ But the gap was filled by "Junius." By those celebrated letters, reprinted and circulated in every possible shape, the people were made parties, in its progress, to much of what was doing in St. Stephen's; in the house itself the popular element was made of greater practical importance; the democratic spirit throughout the country was strengthened; and, above all, the right of the newspapers to report the debates was at last secured.

¹ Sir Henry Cavendish was member for Lostwithiel through the whole of the Parliament which met in May, 1768, and was dissolved in June, 1774, while these matters were debated. So strictly, however, was the standing order against strangers enforced during its continuance, or rather, so severely were all persons punished who ventured to make public any speeches of the members, that, with the exception of one or two by Burke and George Grenville, published by themselves, not one of the many famous efforts of the orators of the time, or indeed anything but the scantiest outline of the actual proceedings of the House, has illustrated our parliamentary histories. Nevertheless it was known that Sir Henry Cavendish (like Sir Simonds d'Ewes in a former and yet more exciting Parliament) had taken private notes, and the publication of these we owe to the energy of the late Mr. Wright, by whom, after fifteen years' search, they were found among the Egerton MSS. of the British Museum. They filled forty-nine small quarto volumes; contained ample notes of all the debates during the six sessions of the Parliament in question (excepting only a portion of the winter session of 1770); had been corrected and rewritten, in a great many places, by Sir Henry Cavendish himself; and in some continued still in shorthand. Mr. Wright immediately began their publication, continued it with but moderate patronage (I fear) until two large volumes had been nearly completed, leaving the debates of the last three years a blank; and then died. More than two-thirds of these most valuable notes remain unpublished. Will no private or public society undertake to complete them? Might they not by this time be considered sufficiently to belong to our national history to justify their publication, even by an order of the House of Commons itself? Its cost would be something less than of one reasonably sized Blue Book, and would the good sense and liberality of such a vote be quite without precedent? 1852. No answer has been made to this appeal. 1870.

CHAPTER V

LONDON LIFE

1769-1770

HORACE WALPOLE, hopeless of his cousin Conway for a Premier, had left politics now; but he could see those increasing intimations of an uneasy democratic spirit at which I have glanced at the close of the last chapter, and he saw them with alarm. To meet this year at the same dinner-table the Duc de Rochefoucault and Mrs. Macauley,¹ whose statue the rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, had just set up in the chancel of his church, was, to poor Horace, significant of evil.² Yet when he went to Paris a month or two later, and could not get into the Louvre for the crowds that were flocking to see Madame Dubarry's portrait at the exposition, he did not seem to see evil impending there. He could only wonder that the French should adore the monarch that was starving them;³ and when the Revolution *did* come, was ready to tear his periwig with horror. With all his professions for liberty, indeed, he never measured liberty downward. He never thought of the independence of those below him, though half his life was passed in crying out for freedom from those above him. Unhappily, also, little things and great things too often affected him, or escaped him, in

¹ "She is one of the sights," adds Walpole, "that all foreigners are carried to see."—*Letters to Mann*, ii. 25.

² "I choose to be unpopular, lest I should be chosen alderman for some ward or other, and there is one just now vacant. I hope they will elect Mrs. Macauley."—Walpole to Countess Ossory, December 5, 1769. *Ossory Letters* (published at the close of 1848, by Mr. Vernon Smith), i. 5.

³ *Coll. Lett.* v. 268.

exactly the same proportion, to the sad misuse of his brilliant talents; and it was with this Gray pleasantly reproached him, when, after quiet, sarcastic enjoyment of the Paris moralities, he blazed up with so much heat against poor Garrick's Stratford Jubilee. Why so tolerant of Dubarrydom and so wrathful at Vanity Fair.¹

The great actors at the Jubilee in Shakespeare's honor made a three-days' wonder of it (the 6th, 7th, and 8th of September), and then came back to town. Neither Johnson nor Goldsmith had joined them; but among them were Colman, representing his theatre, in place of poor Powell,

¹ Such was the name Gray gave to the Jubilee; but one of Garrick's Cambridge correspondents (Mr. J. Sharp), who reports this, is at the same time careful to tell the sensitive manager (*Garrick Correspondence*, i. 349) that "he spoke handsomely of your happy knack at epilogues." In this, let me add, agreeing with Johnson, who went so far as to say that, although, of course, Dryden had written single prologues and epilogues finer than any of Garrick's, he had not written such a great number on the same level of merit as clever little Davy had managed to write. An ode, however, is not exactly an epilogue, as Garrick found, perhaps too late, while he was perpetrating his ode for the Jubilee. Connected with it is one of the pleasantest of the anecdotes of Gray, told to Mr. Rogers by "the little Fitzherbert" of whom the poet speaks so kindly (*Correspondence of Gray and Mason*, 443), and who became afterwards Lord St. Helens. "I came to St. John's College, Cambridge," he said to Mr. Rogers, who repeated the anecdote to Mr. Mitford, "in 1770, and that year received a visit from Gray, having a letter of introduction to him. He was accompanied by Dr. Gisborne, Mr. Stonhewer, and Mr. Palgrave, and they walked one after one, in Indian file. When they withdrew every college man took off his cap as he passed, a considerable number having assembled in the quadrangle to see Mr. Gray, who was seldom seen. I asked Mr. Gray, to the great dismay of his companions, what he thought of Mr. Garrick's Jubilee Ode, just published? He answered, 'He was easily pleased.'"—*Works*, v. 183. This, at any rate, was better morality than Bishop Warburton's, who, at the very time when he was most intimate with Garrick, and in his correspondence overflowing with compliment, thus wrote to Hurd on the 23d of September, 1769 (*Letters*, 439): "Garrick's portentous Ode, as you truly call it, has but one line of truth in it, which is where he calls Shakespeare the God of our Idolatry: for sense I will not allow it; for that which is so highly satirical he makes the topic of his hero's encomium. The Ode itself is below any of Cibber's. Cibber's nonsense was something like sense; but this man's sense, whenever he deviates into it, is much more like nonsense."

who had died suddenly at Bristol two months before; Foote, laughing at everything going forward; several of Garrick's noble friends—dukes, earls, and aristocratic beauties; and last, not least, Mr. Boswell, "in a Corsican habit, with pistols in his belt and a musket at his back, and in the front of his cap, in gold letters, these words, PAOLI AND LIBERTY."¹ He had written a poem for recitation at the masquerade, to which the crowd refused to listen; but he brought it up to London, fired it off in the newspapers, and had the singular satisfaction of presenting it in person to Paoli himself, who arrived in London not many days after, and with a note from whom Boswell had already, as we have seen, forced his way, Corsican dress and all, into the presence of the great Mr. Pitt. The patriot's struggle having ended in the defeat and absorption of Corsica, he was content to subside into a civil dangler at St. James's with a pension of a thousand a year;² and probably laughed as heartily as anybody when Boswell now appeared in a full suit of black, with "Corsica" exposed in legible letters on his hat, as the dear defunct he

¹ See also Davies's *Life of Garrick*, ii. 226-227.

² *Letters to Mann*, ii. 52-53. "The court artfully adopts him, and thus crushes one egg on which Faction, and her brood hen, Mrs. Macauley, would have been very glad to have sat." In another letter he is still more amusing and detailed. "The opposition were ready to receive and incorporate him in the list of popular tribunes. The court artfully intercepted the project; and deeming patriots of all nations equally corruptible, bestowed a pension of £1000 a year on the unheroic fugitive. Themistocles accepted the gold of Xerxes, and excused himself from receiving a visit from Mrs. Macauley, who had given him printed advice for settling a republic. I saw him soon after his arrival, dangling at court. He was a man of decent deportment, vacant of all melancholy reflection, with as much ease as suited a prudence that seemed the utmost effort of a wary understanding, and so void of anything remarkable in his aspect that, being asked if I knew who it was, I judged him a Scottish officer (for he was sandy complexioned and in regimentals) who was cautiously awaiting the moment of promotion. All his heroism consisted in bearing with composure the accounts of his friends being tortured and butchered, while he was sunk into a pensioner of that very court that had proclaimed his valiant countrymen and associates rebels."—*Letters to Mann*, iii. 386. Not the least remarkable thing about Paoli was that he afterwards became godfather to the son of the Corsican lawyer who became Emperor of France.

was in mourning for. Nor did the fit abate for some time. It was not until several months later that the old laird of Affleck (so was Auchinleck in those days familiarly called) had occasion to make his famous complaint to a friend. "There's nae hope for Jamie, mon. Jamie is gaen clean gyte. What do you think, mon? He's done wi' Paoli; he's off wi' the landlouping scoundrel of a Corsican; and whose tail do you think he has pinn'd himself to now, mon?" And here the old judge paused, to summon up a sneer of most sovereign contempt. "A *dominie*, mon; an auld dominie: he kept a schùle, and cau'd it an acaadamy."¹ But, though not yet exclusively pinned to the auld dominie's tail, Jamie so far abated his ostentatious attendance on the landlouping Corsican as to revive some of the old nights at the "Mitre," and to get up some dinners and drinking parties at his rooms in Old Bond Street. One of the dinners was fixed for the 16th of October; and the party invited were Johnson, Reynolds (now knighted as the President of the Royal Academy), Goldsmith, Garrick, Murphy, Bickerstaff, and Tom Davies.

Some days before it took place, however, an incident occurred of no small interest to that circle. One of Johnson's early acquaintances was the Italian Baretti, a man of cynical temper and overbearing manners,² but also of undoubted ability, who had been useful to him at the time of the *Dictionary*, and whose services had never been forgotten. To Goldsmith, on the other hand, this man had made himself peculiarly hateful by all that malice in little which, on a larger field, he subsequently practised against poor Mrs. Piozzi; and they seem never to have met but to quarrel. Their mutual dislike is described by Tom Davies. "He

¹ Note to *Boswell*, v. 131.

² Johnson thus writes to Mrs. Thrale of "the tyranny of B——i": "Poor B——i! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank he thinks is to be cynical, and to be independent is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest lady, the rather because of his misbehaviors I am afraid he learned part of me." 15th July, 1775. —*Piozzi Letters*, i. 277.

(Goldsmith) least of all mankind, approved Baretti's conversation; he considered him as an insolent, overbearing foreigner; as Baretti, in his turn, thought him an unpolished man and an absurd companion."¹ But it now unhappily fell out that in a street scuffle Baretti drew out a fruit knife which he always carried, and killed a man (one of three who had grossly insulted him on his somewhat rudely repulsing the overtures of a woman with whom they were proved to be connected);² and it further happened that Goldsmith was among the first to hear of the incident next morning, while Baretti was under examination before Sir John Fielding. The good-natured man forgot all his wrongs in an instant, thought only of his enemy's evil plight, and hurried off to render him assistance. "When this unhappy Italian," says Davies, "was charged with murder, and sent by Sir John Fielding to Newgate, Goldsmith opened his purse and would have given him every shilling it contained; he at the same time insisted upon going in the coach with him to the place of his confinement."³ Bail was given before Lord Mansfield a few days later; and never were such names, before or since, proffered in connection with such a charge. They were Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Burke, and Garrick. All the friends met to arrange the defence; and it was at one of the consultations, on a hot dispute arising between Burke and Johnson, that the latter is reported to have frankly admitted afterwards, "Burke and I should have been of one opinion if we had had no audience."⁴ Baretti was acquitted, though not without merited rebuke; and Johnson subsequently obtained for him the post of tutor in the family of the Thrales (which Mrs.

¹ *Life of Garrick*, ii. 169.

² See *Boswell*, iii. 98-99, and note.

³ *Life of Garrick*, ii. 169-170.

⁴ Boswell tells this on the authority of George Steevens (viii. 326), but it is surely doubtful if in a matter of life and death the passion of talking for victory could have displayed itself in a man naturally so humane; and it is to be added that George Steevens is not in any matter a very reliable authority. Baretti's witnesses to "the quietness of his general character" were Beauclerc, Reynolds, Johnson, Fitzherbert, Burke, Garrick, Goldsmith, and Dr. Hallifax.

Thrale lived to have reason bitterly to repent), and Reynolds that of honorary foreign secretary to the new Academy.

But Mr. Boswell's dinner is waiting us. On that very day, as Mr. William Filby's bills enable us with commendable correctness to state, Goldsmith's tailor took him home "a half-dress suit of ratteen lined with satin, a pair of silk stocking breeches, and a pair of bloom-colored ditto" (for which the entire charge was about sixteen pounds); and to Old Bond Street the poet would seem to have proceeded in "silk attire."¹ Though he is said to have been last at every dinner-party (arriving always, according to Sir George Beaumont, in a violent bustle just as the rest were sitting down), when he arrived on this occasion there was still a laggard; but Garrick and Johnson were come, and Boswell pleasantly relates with what good-humor they had met; how Garrick played round Johnson with a fond vivacity, taking hold of the breasts of his coat, and, as he looked up

¹ I here give, from Mr. Filby's ledger (*Prior*, ii. 232-233), Goldsmith's sartorial account for 1769 and 1770:

"1769.					
Jan.	6.	To calico waistcoats	£0	7	0
Feb.	9.	To suit of clothes	8	14	8
	11.	To altering two pair of breeches for man	0	2	0
	17.	To mending ditto	0	1	6
Sept.	19.	To pair of silk breeches	2	3	0
	24.	To making frock suit of cloth	6	3	9
Oct.	16.	To making a half-dress suit of ratteen, lined with satin	12	12	0
		To a pair of silk stocking breeches	2	5	0
		To a pair of bloom-colored ditto	1	4	6
1770.					
April	21.	To Bath coating surtout	1	10	0
		To dress suit	9	19	3
May	3.	To suit	5	17	7½
July	4.	To suit	7	13	9
Sept.	8.	To suit of mourning	5	12	0
			£64	6	0¾

(Paid £40 February 8, 1771, by a note of hand on Mr. Thos. Davies; and £23 Oct. 2d, by part of a note of hand on Griffin.)"

in his face with a lively archness, complimenting him on the good health which he seemed then to enjoy, while the sage, shaking his head, beheld him with a gentle complacency. Dinner continued to be kept waiting, however, Reynolds not yet arriving;¹ and, says Boswell, "Goldsmith, to divert the tedious minutes, strutted about bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, *for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions.*" Of course Boswell had no such weakness, any more than Horace Walpole, also a great laugh on the same score. Though the one had so lately figured in Corsican costume, and was so proud of his ordinary dress that he would show off to the smallest of printers' devils his new ruffles and sword; though the other had just received a party of French visitors at Strawberry Hill in elaborate state, presenting himself at the gate in a "cravat of Gibbon's carving" and a pair of James-the-First gloves embroidered up to the elbows—both believed themselves entitled to make the most of poor Goldsmith's "bragging"; and Garrick, however good the humor he might be in, had always his laugh in equal readiness. "Come, come," he said, "talk no more of that. You are perhaps the worst . . . eh, eh!" Goldsmith eagerly attempted to interrupt him. "Nay," continued Garrick, laughing ironically, "nay, you will always *look* like a gentleman; but I am talking of being well or ill *dressed.*" "Well," answered Goldsmith, with an amusing simplicity which makes the anecdote very pleasant to us, "let me tell you, when my tailor brought home my bloom-colored coat, he said, 'Sir, I have a favor to beg of you. When anybody asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby, at the 'Harrow' in Water Lane.'" "Why, sir," remarked Johnson, "that was because he knew the strange color would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how well he could make a coat, even of so absurd a color." Crowds *have*

¹ "I proposed, as usual upon such occasions, to order dinner to be served; adding, ought six people be kept waiting for one? 'Why, yes,' answered Johnson, with a delicate humanity, 'if the one will suffer more by your sitting down than the six will do by waiting.'"—*Boswell*. iii. 83.

been attracted to gaze at it, and Mr. Filby's bloom-colored coat defies the ravages of time!

How the party talked after dinner may be read in Boswell, in all whose reports, however, the confessed object is to give merely the talk of one speaker, with only such limited fragments of remark from others as may be necessary in elucidation of the one. Thus, there are but two sentences preserved of Goldsmith's; both sensible enough, though both of them indicating that he was not disposed to accept all Johnson's criticism for gospel. He put in a word for Pope's character of Addison, as "showing a deep knowledge of the human heart," while Johnson was declaring (quite justly) that in Dryden's poetry were passages drawn from a profundity which Pope could never reach; and he quietly interposed, when Johnson took to praising Lord Kames's *Elements of Criticism*, that it must have been easier to write that book "than it was to read it." Yet a very interesting dinner to have been present at, one feels that on the whole this must have been. Goldsmith's new coat one would like to have seen, with the first freshness of its bloom upon it. Something it must have been to hear Johnson recite, "in his forcible, melodious manner," those magnificent closing lines of the *Dunciad* which Pope himself could not repeat without a voice that faltered with emotion. Nor could the eager encounter of Garrick with Johnson on the respective merits of Shakespeare and Congreve fail to have had its entertainment for us;¹

¹ "Johnson said that the description of the Temple, in the *Mourning Bride*, was the finest poetical passage he had ever read: he recollected none in Shakespeare equal to it. 'But,' said Garrick, all alarmed for the God of his idolatry, 'we know not the extent and variety of his powers. We are to suppose there are such passages in his works. Shakespeare must not suffer from the badness of our memories.' Johnson, diverted by this enthusiastic jealousy, went on, with great ardor: 'No, sir; Congreve has *nature*' (smiling on the tragic eagerness of Garrick); but, composing himself, he added: 'Sir, this is not comparing Congreve on the whole with Shakespeare on the whole; but only maintaining that Congreve has one finer passage than any that can be found in Shakespeare. Sir, a man may have no more than ten guineas in the world, but he may have those ten guineas in one piece; and so may have a finer piece than a man who has ten thousand pound: but then he has only one ten-guinea piece.'"—*Boswell*,

and, before and beyond all, who would not have laughed to see the very giver as well as describer of the feast plucking up courage at it to "venture" a remark, and bluntly called a dunce for his pains! Poor Boswell appears to have been the only one who came off ill at the dinner, as he did at several other meetings before he returned to Scotland, being compared to Pope's dunces,¹ having his head called his peccant part, and receiving other as unequivocal compliments; so that he was fain to console himself with what he now heard Goldsmith, happily adapting an expression in one of Cibber's comedies, say of his hero's conversation: "There is no arguing with Johnson; for when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it."²

iii. 87. If Johnson really believed what he said of Congreve, there is no more to be added than that his own mind could not reach to a finer passage, and did not know it when it lay before him. But, notwithstanding that Congreve's lines really *do* make an appeal to that superstitious side of Johnson's nature which gave always so ready a response, it is also very evident that he was fond of this kind of paradoxical teasing of Garrick. "He told me," says Mrs. Thrale, "how he used to tease Garrick by commendations of the Tomb scene in Congreve's *Mourning Bride*" (evidently the same thing quoted at Boswell's dinner-table), "protesting that Shakespeare had, in the same line of excellence, nothing so good. 'All which is strictly true,' said he" (a pity he did!) "'but that is no reason for supposing Congreve is to stand in competition with Shakespeare; these fellows know not how to blame, nor how to commend.'"—*Anecdotes*, 58.

¹ While Johnson was talking loudly in praise of the closing lines of the *Dunciad*, one of the company ventured to say (so Boswell tenderly introduces a remark from himself, the host and entertainer): "'Too fine for such a poem: a poem on what?' JOHNSON (with a disdainful look), 'Why, on Dunces. It was worth while being a dunce then. Ah, sir, hadst thou lived in those days! It is not worth while being a dunce now, when there are no wits.'" Northcote, in his *Life of Reynolds* (ii. 189), has mistold this same incident, evidently taking it out of Boswell's book; and yet, as I have elsewhere frequent occasion to remark, the copyist gets himself quoted afterwards to corroborate or invalidate the only real authority. See Croker's *Boswell*, 203, note 6.

² *Boswell*, iii. 104. Cooke reports another saying of Goldsmith's to the same effect. "There's no chance for you in arguing with Johnson. Like the Tartar horse, if he does not conquer you in front, his kick from behind is sure to be fatal." Cooke adds that Goldsmith never had any scruple in venting his pleasantries before Johnson, with whom he might say and do many things *cum privilegio*; for, says Cooke very truly, Dr. Johnson

The nature of Goldsmith's employments at the close of 1769 is indicated in the advertising columns of the papers of the day. His *English History* occupied him chiefly, his *History of Animated Nature* occasionally; he had undertaken to write a life of his countryman, Parnell, for a new edition of his poems (this being a subject in which, as he remarks in the biography itself, what he remembered having collected in boyhood "from my father and uncle, who knew him," had doubtless given him a personal interest); and the speedy publication of the *Deserted Village* was twice announced in the *Public Advertiser*. But it was not published speedily. Still it was paused over, altered, polished, and refined. Bishop Percy has mentioned¹ the delightful facility with which his prose flowed forth unblotted with erasure, as a contrast to the labor and pains of his verse interlined with countless alterations; but in prose as in poetry he aimed at the like effects and obtained them. He knew that no picture will stand if the colors are bad, ill-chosen, or indiscreetly combined; and that not chaos, but order, is creation. It is a pity that men, though of perhaps greater genius, who have lived since his time, should not more carefully have pondered such lessons as his writings bequeath to us. It is a pity that the disposition to rush into print should be so general; for few men have ever repented of publishing too late. Goldsmith, alas! never found himself without the excuse which the successful poet, supreme in his power and mastery over the town, threw out for the instant needs and pressing necessities of less fortunate men.

knew Goldsmith early and while he was struggling with his poverty, and always thought as respectfully of his heart as of his talents.

¹ *Memoir*, 113. "His elegant and enchanting style in prose flowed from him with such facility that in whole quires of his *Histories*, *Animated Nature*, etc., he had seldom occasion to correct or alter a single word; but in his verses, especially his two great ethic poems, nothing could exceed the patient and incessant revisal which he bestowed upon them. To save himself the trouble of transcription, he wrote the lines in his first copy very wide, and would so fill up the intermediate space with reiterated corrections that scarcely a word of his first effusions was left unaltered."

“‘Keep your piece nine years.’
‘Nine years!’ cries he, who, high in Drury Lane,
Lull’d by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term ends,
Obliged by hunger and request of friends.”¹

Yet, neither at the request of friends nor at the more urgent call of hunger, did Goldsmith peril his chances of being cherished as a poet by future generations. Pope’s own method of sending forth a part of a poem one winter and promising its completion for the winter following, which Mr. Rogers has often enlarged upon to me as the only true method, would be laughed at nowadays; yet extremely few are the thoughts “conceived with rapture and with fire begot,” compared with those that may be carefully brought forth, becomingly and charmingly habited, and introduced by the Graces. Men of the more brilliant order of fancy and imagination should be always distrustful of their powers. Spar and stalactite are bad materials for the foundation of solid edifices.

The year 1770 opens with a glimpse into the old fireside at Kilmore. The Lawders do not seem to have communicated with him since his uncle Contarine’s death; and a legacy of £15, left him by that generous friend, remained unappropriated in their hands. His brother Maurice, still without calling or employment, and apparently living on such of his relatives as from time to time were willing to afford him a home, probably heard this legacy mentioned while he made one of his self-supporting visits, for he straightway wrote to Oliver. The money would help him to an outfit, if his famous brother could help him to an appointment; and to express his earnest hopes in this direction was the drift of the letter. His sister Johnson wrote soon after, for her husband, in a precisely similar strain; and to these letters Goldsmith’s reply has been kept. It shows little change since earlier days. His Irish friends and family are as they then were. They do not seem to

¹ *Prologue to Satires*, 40-44.

have answered many recent communications sent to them; he now learns for the first time that Charles is no longer in Ireland; his brother-in-law Hodson has been as silent as the rest; his sister Hodson he never mentions, some early disagreement remaining still unsettled; and he sends Cousin Jenny his portrait, in memory of an original "almost forgot." The letter is directed to "Mr. Maurice Goldsmith, at James Lawder's, Esq., at Kilmore, near Carrick-on-Shannon," and bears the date of "January, 1770."

"DEAR BROTHER,—I should have answered your letter sooner, but, in truth, I am not fond of thinking of the necessities of those I love when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are still every way unprovided for; and what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister Johnson,¹ by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire, but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have until I can serve you, him, and myself more effectually. As yet no opportunity has offered, but I believe you are pretty well convinced that I will not be remiss when it arrives. The King has lately been pleased to make me Professor of Ancient History in a royal Academy of Painting which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed; and I took it rather as a compliment to the institution than any benefit to myself. Honors to one in my situation are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt.² You tell me that there are fourteen or fifteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Lawder, and you ask me what I would have done with them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore how to dispose of money which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely—and this letter will serve to witness—give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it: whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our poor shattered family demands our sincerest gratitude, and though they have almost forgot me, yet, if

¹ The "Jenny" of a former letter; see vol. i. 164.

² He uses the same comparison in one of his essays, and again introduces it in the *Haunch of Venison*. Yet it belongs to Tom Brown, who, in his *Laconics* (pointed out to me by Mr. Peter Cunningham), says that "to treat a poor wretch with a bottle of Burgundy, or fill his snuff-box, is like giving a pair of lace ruffles to a man that has never a shirt on his back. Put something into his pocket."—*Works* (Ed. 1709), iv. 14.

good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return and increase their good-humor by adding to my own. I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkenor's, folded in a letter. The face, you well know, is ugly enough, but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some mezzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. I believe I have written an hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer from any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me those regards which I must ever retain for them. If, then, you have a mind to oblige me, you will write often, whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of our family and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their time, and whether they ever make mention of me. Tell me about my mother, my brother Hodson, and his son; my brother Harry's son and daughter, my sister Johnson, the family of Ballyoughter, what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother; I don't understand you—where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally filled with news of this kind would make me very happy, and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be yours, most affectionately, OLIVER GOLDSMITH."¹

The writer's weakness is here, too, as of old. He believes he *could* get, for his poor, idle, thriftless petitioners, exactly what they want; though ruffles, minus the shirt, are the sum of his own acquisitions. But he will wait; and they must wait; and good things are sure to arrive; and they will one day be all in good-humor again. The old, hopeful, sanguine, unreflecting story! Nevertheless, Maurice soon tired of waiting, as his wealthier relatives tired of helping him to wait; and he is shortly afterwards discovered again complaining to his brother that really he finds it difficult to live like a gentleman. Oliver replies upon this in somewhat plainer fashion, recommending him by all means to quit the unprofitable calling, and betake himself to some handicraft employment, if no better can be found; whereupon Maurice bound himself to a cabinet-maker in

¹ *Percy Memoir*, 86-89. To the original is annexed a receipt which shows that the sum of £15 was paid to Maurice Goldsmith for a legacy bequeathed to Oliver Goldsmith by the late Rev. Thomas Contarine. Dated 4th February, 1770.

Drumsna, in the county of Leitrim, in which calling, several years after his brother's death, he kept a shop in Dublin. Meanwhile Oliver's inquiry after brother-in-law Hodson's son had the effect, soon after his letter reached Athlone, of bringing back to London a very unsettled and somewhat eccentric youth, who had formerly visited Goldsmith, after abruptly quitting Dublin University, leaving at that time obscure traces of the extent to which his celebrated relative had befriended him, and who now, having occupied the interval chiefly in foreign travel, during which he had turned to account certain half-finished medical studies, lived for the most part in London, until his uncle Oliver's death, as a pensioner on his scanty resources. He resembled Oliver in some thoughtless peculiarities of character and in his odd vicissitudes of good and evil fortune, for he once paid a small debt with an undrawn lottery ticket which turned out a prize of £20,000. During his residence in London he practised occasionally, without any regular qualification, as an apothecary in Newman Street; but he ultimately ended his days as a prosperous Irish gentleman, farming a patrimonial estate.¹ When Goldsmith died half the unpaid bill he owed to Mr. William Filby, and which amounted in all to only £79, was for clothes supplied to this nephew Hodson. Yet it does not appear that the bill was paid by this very genuine young branch of the old, careless, idle, improvident Goldsmith stock.²

¹ His son, Oliver Goldsmith Hodson, when Dr. Annesley Streat was writing to Mr. Mangin from Athlone at the close of 1807, had inherited and was living "on an estate of about £700 a year, eight miles from this town."—Mangin's *Essay*, 148. I have to add that one of the descendants of these connections of Goldsmith, who has resumed the original spelling of the name, is my solicitor and valued friend, Mr. G. F. Hudson, of Bucklersbury, in whose genial literary tastes, enjoyment of doing good, and a turn for humorous observation applied to the kindest use, the good-hearted poet himself might have acknowledged no unworthy kinsman.

² I here give, from Mr. Filby's ledger, that account with the worthy citizen during the last three years of Goldsmith's life which was the last ever delivered to him. The balance will be given hereafter, as it stood at the period of his death:

"1771.

Jan.	3.	To clothes' scouring and mending and pressing	£0	4	6
	3.	To pair of best silk stocking breeches	2	5	6
	24.	To suit of clothes, lined with silk, gold buttons, etc.	9	17	6
Feb.	8.	To best silk breeches	2	5	6
April	11.	To frock suit, lined with (<i>illegible</i>) half trimmed with gold sprig buttons	8	13	5
	17.	To Queen's blue-dress suit	11	17	0
Oct.	3.	To suit, plain	5	13	0
Dec.	5.	To silk breeches	2	2	9
		To jobs, mending, etc.	0	5	0

1772.

Jan.	4.	To half-trimmed frock suit	5	15	0
	31.	To suit of mourning	5	12	0
March	18.	To fine ratteen surtout, in grain	3	5	6
April	28.	To Princess stuff breeches	1	7	0
May	1.	To superfine cloth ditto	1	3	0
	2.	To suit of livery	4	10	6
	5.	To ditto frock and waistcoat	2	12	6
		To jacket	1	1	0
	21.	To your blue velvet suit	21	10	9
		To crimson collar for man	0	2	6
June	8.	To altering two coats	0	3	0
	19.	To velvet suit new-colored	1	1	0
July	18.	To mending, etc.	0	2	6
Nov.	13.	To making velvet waistcoat	1	1	0
Dec.	17.	To jobs, etc.	1	5	8

1773.

March	4.	To Princess stuff breeches	1	7	6
March	11.	To suit	10	0	0
April	12.	To mending, etc.	0	1	6
May	7.	To velvet waistcoat, cleaning, etc.	0	15	9
	10.	To altering suit, and for serge de soy for waistcoat and shirts, etc.	0	12	6
	13.	To rich straw silk tamboured waistcoat	4	4	0
June	2.	Tamboured waistcoat cleaned	0	1	6
		To green half-trimmed frock and breeches, lined with silk, etc.	6	0	0
		To silver gray silk tamboured waistcoat	4	0	0
	17.	To fine brown cambric waistcoat, tamboured	2	1	6
		Mr. Hodson's bill per order	35	3	0

Bill delivered £158 4 4

(Of this, £50 was paid the 5th April, and £60 the 14th September, 1773, leaving a balance against Goldsmith of £48 4s. 4d.)"

CHAPTER VI

DINNERS AND TALK

1770

IN Goldsmith's letter to his brother Maurice it will have been observed that the writer's friends over the Shannon were told shortly to expect some mezzotinto prints of himself, and of such friends of his as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. The fact thus indicated has its proper biographical significance. The head of the author of the *Traveller* now figured in the print-shops. Reynolds had painted his portrait. "In poetry we may be said to have nothing new," says a letter-writer of the day;¹ "but we have the mezzotinto print of the new poet, Dr. Goldsmith, in the print-shop windows. It is in profile from a painting of Reynolds, and resembles him greatly." The engraving was an admirable one, having been executed, under the eye of the great painter himself, by Giuseppe Marchi, his first pupil. The original, which Reynolds intended for himself, passed into the possession of the Duke of Dorset, and remains still at Knowle; but a copy also painted by Reynolds, and the only other portrait of Goldsmith known to have been touched by his pencil, was taken afterwards for Thrale, and ultimately placed in the dining-room at Streatham, by the side of Johnson, Burke, Garrick, and others of his famous friends.² The life of his celeb-

¹ To Smollett.

² Madame d'Arblay, in the *Memoirs* of her father (ii. 80-81), thus describes the Streatham portrait gallery: "Mrs. Thrale and her eldest daughter were in one piece, over the fireplace, at full length. The rest of the pictures were all three-quarters. Mr. Thrale was over the door leading

rity is thus, as it were, beginning; and from no kinder, no worthier hand than that of Reynolds could it receive inauguration. The great painter's restless and fidgety sister, who used herself to paint portraits with such exact imitation of her brother's defects and avoidance of his beauties that, according to Northcote,¹ they made himself cry and

to his study. The general collection then began by Lord Sandys and Lord Westcote, two early noble friends of Mr. Thrale. Then followed Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Baretii, Sir Robert Chambers, and Sir Joshua Reynolds himself. All painted in the highest style of the great master, who much delighted in this his Streatham Gallery. There was place left but for one more frame, when the acquaintance with Dr. Burney began at Streatham." The whole of this gallery of portraits by Reynolds was sold by auction in May, 1816. At the time when they were executed the painter's price for portraits of that size was thirty-five guineas; the following were the prices realized at the sale fifty-four years ago. They are taken from Mrs. Piozzi's marked catalogue in *Piozziana*, 51. See also *Anecdotes*, 295.

"THE STREATHAM PORTRAITS

LORD SANDYS	£36 15	Lady Downshire; his heir.
LORD LYTTTELTON [Lord Westcote].	43 1	Mr. Lyttelton; his son.
MRS. PIOZZI [and her daughter] . .	81 18	S. Boddington, Esq. a rich merchant.
GOLDSMITH [duplicate of the original]	133 7	Duke of Bedford.
SIR J. REYNOLDS	128 2	R. Sharp, Esq. M.P.
SIR R. CHAMBERS	84 0	Lady Chambers; his widow.
DAVID GARRICK	183 15	Dr. Charles Burney, Greenwich.
BARETTI	31 10	Stewart, Esq. I know not who.
DR. BURNEY	84 0	Dr. C. Burney of Greenwich, his son
EDMUND BURKE	252 0	R. Sharp, Esq. M.P.
DR. JOHNSON	378 0	Watson Taylor, Esq. by whom for . . .
. . . MR. MURPHY, was offered . .	102 18	but I bought it <i>in</i> ."

¹ *Conversations*, 167. Admirably is the old painter made to say: "It is that which makes every one dread a mimic. Your self-love is alarmed, without being so easily reassured. You know there is a difference, but it is not great enough to make you feel quite at ease. The line of demarcation between the true and the spurious is not sufficiently broad and palpable. The copy you see is vile or indifferent; and the original, you suspect (but for your partiality to yourself), is not perhaps much better." That is Hazlitt all over. Let me add that Madame d'Arblay gives a capital sketch

everybody else laugh, thought it marvellous that so much dignity could have been given to the poet's face and yet so strong a likeness be conveyed; for "Dr. Goldsmith's cast of countenance," she proceeds to inform us, "and indeed his whole figure from head to foot, impressed every one at first sight with an idea of his being a low mechanic; particularly, I believe, a journeyman tailor." And in proof the lively lady relates that Goldsmith came in one day, at a party at her brother's, very indignant at an insult he had received from some one in a coffee-house; and on explaining it as "the fellow took me for a tailor," all the party present either laughed aloud or showed they suppressed a laugh.¹

of Miss Reynolds's fidgets in the *Memoirs* of her father, i. 331-332; and a very laughable one of Boswell, ii. 190-197; iii. 113-115.

¹ Recollections in Croker's *Boswell*, 831. It would appear also that the Rev. Mr. Percival Stockdale, a commonplace hanger-on of the booksellers in those days, who wisely relinquished literature for the church, and wrote a querulous book of *Memoirs* complaining of his non-appreciation by everybody, appears to have fallen in with the "tailor" notion marvellously. "Soon after," he says, "my friend Davies had published my translation of Tasso's *Aminta*, I called on him one forenoon, and was with him in his parlor when Dr. Goldsmith entered, and conversed with us for about an hour. I had dined with Davies a day or two before, and Goldsmith was one of the company. He had a beautiful mind, but he was a man of a very mean aspect, person, and manner. On the morning to which I allude, just before we were joined by Goldsmith, Davies asked me what I thought of him? I replied that I held his genius in due estimation, but that I never saw a man who looked more like a tailor. Before he left us, he desired Davies to let him have my translation of the *Aminta*. As he put it into his pocket, he turned to me, and said: 'Mr. Stockdale, I shall soon take measure of you.' I answered that 'I hoped he would not pinch me.' From what had passed before he came in, and afterwards, Davies and I, as soon as he had left the house, gave a full indulgence to our risible faculties. The odd coincidence of Goldsmith's metaphor and of my comparison, perhaps makes this interview worthy of being related." Such is the story, which I quote from *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Percival Stockdale* (1809), ii. 136-137. Precisely the same story in the same words will be found in the *Life of Goldsmith* by Mr. Prior (ii. 237-239), who introduces it with the remark that Mr. Stockdale's published autobiography "furnishes scarcely an allusion to Goldsmith. His papers, however, supply an anecdote communicated by a lady eminent for her writings," etc. And then, *totidem verbis*, we have the story. But the habit is so frequent with Mr. Prior of quoting published statements as original com-

It is a pity they were not more polite, were it only for their host's sake; since it is certain that these gibes were never countenanced by Reynolds. He knew Goldsmith better; and as he knew, he had painted him. A great artist does not measure a face tailor-fashion; it is by seizing and showing the higher aspects of character that he puts upon his work the stamp of history. It is the distinction between truth and a caricature of it, and expresses all the measureless distance between a Reynolds and a *Miss* Reynolds, or between such character painting as Hogarth's and such caricaturing as Bunbury's.¹

No man had seen earlier than Reynolds into Goldsmith's better qualities; no man so loved or honored him to the last; and no man so steadily protected him, with calm, equable, kindly temper, against Johnson's careless sallies.² "It is amazing," said the latter more than once, with that too emphatic habit of 'overcharging' the characteristics of his friends which all agreed in attributing to him, "it is amazing how little Goldsmith knows; he seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else"; and on Reynolds quietly interposing, "Yet there is no man whose company is more liked," the other, fully conceding this, would explain it by the gratification people felt to find a man of "the most distinguished abilities as a writer" inferior in other respects to themselves. But Reynolds had another explanation. He thought that much of Goldsmith's nonsense, as the nonsense of a man of undoubted wit and understanding, had the essence of conviv-

munications that I need hardly have paused to mention it in this instance.

¹ See *post*, chap. x.

² I have always regretted that the excellent writer, Crabbe, should have invented an illustration of Goldsmith's vanity so opposed to all the known records of his intercourse with Reynolds as that which these terse and happily-expressed lines convey :

. . . "Poets have sicken'd at a dancer's praise ;
And one, the happiest writer of his time,
Grew pale at hearing Reynolds was sublime ;
That Rutland's duchess wore a heavenly smile—
'And I,' said he, 'neglected all the while !'"

iality in it.¹ He fancied it not seldom put on for that reason, and for no other. "One should take care," says Addison, "not to grow too wise for so great a pleasure of life as laughter"; and some such maxim, Reynolds seems to have thought, was put in practice by Goldsmith.² It was not a little, at any rate, to have given that impression to so wise as well as kind an observer, to a man of whom Johnson said to Boswell that he had known no one who had passed through life with more observation;³ and the

¹ Mrs. Piozzi, in her *Travels* (ii. 315), sets forth that "poor Dr. Goldsmith" said once, "I would advise every young fellow setting out in life to *love gravy*"; alleging for it the serious reason that "he had formerly seen a glutton's eldest nephew disinherited because his uncle never could persuade him to say he liked gravy." Imagine the dulness that would convert a jocose saying of this kind into an unconscious utterance of grave absurdity!

² "Sir Joshua frequently had heard Goldsmith talk warmly of the pleasure of being liked, and observe how hard it would be if literary excellence should preclude a man from that satisfaction, which he perceived it often did, from the envy that attended it; and, therefore, Sir Joshua was convinced that he was intentionally more absurd," etc.—*Northcote*, i. 328. It seems to me difficult to reconcile this with a statement in the same book (i. 248), to the effect that "Sir Joshua used to say that Goldsmith looked at, or considered, public notoriety or fame as one great parcel to the whole of which he laid claim, and whoever partook of any part of it, whether dancer, singer, slight-of-hand man, or tumbler, deprived him of his right, and drew off from himself the attention of the world, which he was striving to gain." The truth is that the first passage is copied by Northcote from Boswell, who expressly says that he had it from Reynolds himself, and adds, "with due deference to Sir Joshua's ingenuity, I think the conjecture too refined."—(ii. 190, *note*). Whereas the second saying, attributed to Reynolds, rests solely on Northcote's authority; which I must be excused for saying is not entitled to any weight on such a point as this. I may add that even Beattie, with all his confessed and open dislike of Goldsmith, sides, perhaps unconsciously, with Reynolds. "His common conversation was a strange mixture of absurdity and silliness; of silliness so great as to make me think sometimes he affected it; yet he was a great genius of no mean rank," etc.—Forbes's *Beattie*, ii. 50. Mrs. Piozzi's emphatic manuscript comment, in the volume before referred to (pp. 81 and 122), on Beattie's suggestion that perhaps Goldsmith "affected" silliness, is—"Not he indeed!"

³ "Sir," said Johnson to Boswell, "I know no man who has passed through life with more observation than Reynolds." And see Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 116 and 204.

confidence between the friends, which was probably thus established, remained unbroken to the end. I can only discover one disagreement that ever came between them; and the famous dinner-parties in Leicester Square were now seldom unenlivened by the good-humor and gayety of Goldsmith.

Nor is it improbable that, occasionally, they were a little in need of both. "Well, Sir Joshua," said lawyer Dunning on arriving first at one of these parties, "and whom have you got to dine with you to-day? The last time I dined in your house the company was of such a sort that by — I believe all the rest of the world enjoyed peace for that afternoon."¹ But though vehemence and disputation will at times usurp quieter enjoyments, where men of genius and strong character are assembled, the evidence that has survived of these celebrated meetings in no respect impairs their indestructible interest. They were the first great example that had been given in this country of a cordial intercourse between persons of distinguished pretensions of all kinds—poets, physicians, lawyers, deans, historians, actors, temporal and spiritual peers, House of Commons men, men of science, men of letters, painters, philosophers, musicians, and lovers of the arts—meeting on a ground of hearty ease, good-humor, and pleasantry, which exalts my respect for the memory of Reynolds. It was no prim fine table he sat them down to. There was little order or arrangement; there was more abundance than elegance; and a happy freedom thrust conventionalism aside. Often was the dinner-board prepared for seven or eight required to accommodate itself to fifteen or sixteen; for often, on the very eve of dinner, would Sir Joshua tempt afternoon visitors with intimation that John-

¹ "It is a fact that a certain nobleman, an intimate friend of Reynolds, had strangely conceived in his mind such a formidable idea of all those persons who had gained great fame as literary characters that I have heard Sir Joshua say he verily believed he could no more have prevailed upon this noble person to dine at the same table with Johnson and Goldsmith than with two tygers."—Northcote's *Life of Reynolds*, i. 329. This is repeated in Hazlitt's *Conversations* (39–42), the nobleman being described as "Lord B—, and a man of good information too."

son, or Garrick, or Goldsmith was to dine there. Nor was the want of seats the only difficulty. A want of knives and forks, of plates and glasses, as often succeeded. In something of the same style, too, was the attendance; the "two or three occasional domestics" were undisciplined; the kitchen had to keep pace with the visitors; and it was easy to know the guests best acquainted with the house, by their never failing to call instantly for beer, bread, or wine, that they might get them before the first course was over and the worst confusion began. Once Sir Joshua was prevailed upon to furnish his table more amply with dinner glasses and decanters, and some saving of time they proved; yet, as these "accelerating utensils" were demolished in the course of service, he could never be persuaded to replace them. "But such trifling embarrassments," added Mr. Courtenay, describing them to Sir James Macintosh, "only served to enhance the hilarity and singular pleasure of the entertainment." It was not the wine, dishes, and cookery, it was not the fish and venison, that were talked of or recommended; those social hours, that irregular convivial talk, had matter of higher relish, and fare more eagerly enjoyed. And amid all the animated bustle of his guests the host sat perfectly composed; always attentive to what was said, never minding what was eat or drunk, and leaving every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself. Though so severe a deafness had resulted from cold caught on the Continent in early life as to compel the use of a trumpet, Reynolds profited by its use to hear or not to hear, or as he pleased to enjoy the privileges of both, and keep his own equanimity undisturbed.¹ "He is the same all the year round," exclaimed

¹ Talking of melancholy, Johnson said: "Some men, and very thinking men too, have not those vexing thoughts. Sir Joshua Reynolds is the same all the year round. Beauclerc, except when ill and in pain, is the same."—*Boswell*, vi. 120; and see vii. 11. On this latter occasion he joined Burke with Reynolds. "I am not so myself," he added, "but this I do not mention commonly." As to Reynolds's trumpet, let me quote the example of Le Sage: "Il faisoit usage d'un cornet qu'il appellait son bienfaiteur. 'Quand je trouve,' disait-il, 'des visages nouveaux, et que j'espère ren-

Johnson, with honest envy. In illness and in pain he is still the same. Sir, he is the most invulnerable man I know; the man with whom, if you should quarrel, you will find the most difficulty how to abuse." Nor was this praise obtained by preference of any, but by cordial respect to all; for in Reynolds there was as little of the sycophant as of the tyrant. However high the rank of the guests invited, he waited for none. His dinners were served always precisely at five o'clock. His was not the fashionable ill-breeding, says Mr. Courtenay, "which could wait an hour for two or three persons of title," and put the rest of the company out of humor by the invidious distinction.¹

Such were the memorable meetings, less frequent at first than they afterwards became, from which Goldsmith was now rarely absent. Here appeared the dish of peas one day that were anything but their natural color, and which one of Beauclerc's waggish friends recommended should be sent to Hammersmith, because "that was the way to Turnham Green [turn 'em green]." It was said in a whisper to Goldsmith, and so tickled and delighted him that he resolved to pass it off for his own at the house of Burke, who had a mighty relish for a bad pun.² But when the time

contrer des gens d'esprit, je tiens mon cornet; quand ce sont des sots, je le reserve, et je les défile de m'ennuyer."

¹ His biographer Farington estimates his Leicester Square expenses at £2000 a year, "a considerable sum according to the value of money at that time; but he wisely judged that to be a prudent expenditure, which procured him such advantages."—clxxxv. Malone remembered a party of fifteen assembled round his table at dinner, of whom twelve were notably distinguished men.—lxxxii.

² "The noxious streams of St. Stephen's," writes Lord Charlemont, congratulating Burke on the Parliamentary recess, "are changed for the pure air of Gregories, oratory yields to table-talk, and a bad pun now takes place of all other figures of speech."—*Burke Correspondence*, i. 166. Who has not felt the weakness, and thought better of the witty and the wise for condescending to it? Dryden said (*Gentleman's Magazine*, ii. 645) that he never knew the wisest man who had a fair opportunity for a good pun lose the opportunity; and I believe him. "I will tell you a good thing," says Swift to Stella, "I said to my Lord Carteret. 'So,' says he, 'my Lord — came up to me, and asked me,' etc. 'No,' said I, 'my Lord — never did, nor ever can come up to you.' We all pun here

came for repeating it, he had unluckily forgotten the point, and fell into hapless confusion. "That is the way to *make* 'em green," he said: but no one laughed: "I mean that is the *road* to turn 'em green," he blundered out; but still no

sometimes. Lord Carteret set down Prior the other day in his chariot, and Prior thanked him for his charity; that was fit for Dilly." (Dillon Ashe, an inordinately punning parson of those days.)—*Works*, ii. 139. Again, in one of his letters: "But I'll tell you a good pun. A fellow hard by pretends to cure agues, and has set out a sign and spells it egoes. A gentleman and I observing it, he said, 'How does that fellow pretend to cure agues?' I said I did not know, but I was sure it was not by a *spell*." This last was, indeed, admirable. But the execrable are often worthy of all applause (see Swift's *Works*, iii. 134–136; ii. 129; xiii. 387–433; xv. 351; and his Correspondence *passim*), and I know none more atrocious than may frequently be found in Shakespeare. The reader will perhaps not object, if, in fulfilment of a promise made (see vol. ii. 108), I here subjoin one or two examples of Burke's puns, partly to refute Johnson's charge that he had no humor, and partly to exhibit what was undoubtedly one source of the liking between Burke and Goldsmith—their common love of a joke, and indifference whether a bad or good one. "When," says Boswell (iv. 29), "Mr. Wilkes, in his days of tumultuous opposition, was borne upon the shoulders of the mob, Mr. Burke (as Mr. Wilkes told me himself, with classical admiration) applied to him what Horace says of Pindar—*numerisque fertur LEGE solutis*." This was excellent, and what Reynolds truly called dignifying a pun. The next, though also classical, is less successful. He said that, "Horace has in one line given a description of a good desirable manor: '*Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines*'; that is to say, a *modus* as to the tithes and certain *fines*."—vii. 175. A third was in answer to the Prince of Wales, who, having asked Burke if a toastmaster was not absolute, was answered, "Yes, *jure de vino*." See also post, chap. xvii. I again quote Boswell. "I told him I had seen, at a *blue-stocking* assembly, a number of ladies sitting round a worthy and tall friend of ours (Mr. Langton), listening to his literature. 'Ay,' said he, 'like maids round a May-pole.'"—iv. 28. For one of Burke's puns which has relation to a notorious quack of that day, Dr. Rock, squibbed and laughed at in letter lxviii. of the *Citizen of the World*, we are indebted to Mr. Croker. Burke one day called the noble-hearted Whig physician Brocklesby, *Dr. Rock*, and on his taking some offence at this disreputable appellation, Burke undertook to prove *algebraically* that Rock was his proper name, thus: "*Brock*—*b*=*Rock*, or *Brock less b*, makes *Rock*. Q.E.D."—*Croker*, 776. Others by Burke have appeared in the course of my narrative, or will hereafter do so, and on the whole we may hardly doubt that Reynolds had good ground for his remark that he had often heard Burke say, in the course of an evening, ten good things, each of which would have served a noted wit (whom he named) to live upon for a twelvemonth.

one laughed: and, as Beauclerc tells the story, he started up disconcerted, and abruptly quitted the table. A tavern he would often quit, Hawkins informs us, if his jokes were unsuccessful; though at the same time he would generally preface them, as with an instinctive distrust of their effect, "now I'll tell you a story of myself, which some people laugh at and some do not." The worthy knight adds a story something like Beauclerc's, which he says occurred at the breaking up of one of those tavern evenings, when he entreated the company to sit down, and told them if they would call for another bottle they should hear one of his *bon-mots*. It turned out to be what he had said on hearing of old Sheridan's habit of practising his stage gestures in a room hung round with ten looking-glasses, "then there were ten ugly fellows together"; whereupon, everybody remaining silent, he asked why they did not laugh, "which they not doing, he without tasting the wine left the room in anger."¹

But all this, even if correctly reported, was less the sensitiveness of ill-nature than the sudden shame of exaggerated self-distrust. Poor Goldsmith! He could never acquire what it is every one's duty to learn—the making light of petty annoyances. *Consider, sir, how insignificant this will appear a twelvemonth hence,*² was, on such occasions, the

¹ Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*, 418. That the Sheridan story was a favorite with him might be inferred from the allusion to it introduced in one of his early letters to his cousin Mrs. Lawder, see vol. i. 142.

² *Boswell*, ii. 204–205. "I have tried it frequently," adds Boswell, "with good effect." For much of the same practical wisdom, invaluable in the ordinary affairs of life, he and all of us are not less indebted to Johnson. Here is another precious piece of counsel. "When any fit of anxiety, or gloominess, or perversion of mind 'lays hold upon you, make it a rule not to publish it by complaints, but exert your whole care to hide it; by endeavoring to hide it, you will drive it away. Be always busy." And see v. 333; vii. 302. Boswell had a habit of low spirits, very sincere in its way, I have no doubt, though Johnson had no toleration for it. "I hoped you had got rid of all this hypocrisy of misery," he says to him on one occasion. "What have you to do with liberty and necessity? or what more than to hold your tongue about it?"—viii. 42–43. Still poor Boszzy would fall again into his fit, and ask him what *was* the use of all

precious saying of Johnson, who, if he often inflicted the vexation, was commonly the first to suggest its remedy. But Goldsmith never lost his over-sensitive nature. His very suspicions involved him in unreserved disclosures which revealed the unspoiled simplicity of his heart. Alas! that the subtle insight which is so able to teach others should so often be powerless to guide itself! Could Goldsmith only have been as indifferent as he was earnest, as impudent as he was frank, he might have covered effectually every imperfection in his character. Could he but have practised in his person any part of the exquisite address he possessed with his pen, not an objection would have been heard against him.¹ But when the pen was put down, the enchanter was without his wand, and an ordinary mortal like the rest of us. That consciousness of self which so

the trouble men took for objects of pursuit in themselves indifferent. "Sir," said he, in an animated tone, "it is driving on the system of life."—viii. 90. So, when Boswell consulted him as to a dispute in which he found himself involved, he was reminded that life is but short, and no time can be afforded but for the indulgence of real sorrow, or contests upon questions seriously momentous. "Let us not throw away any of our days upon useless resentment, or contend who shall hold out longest in stubborn malignity. It is best not to be angry; and best, in the next place, to be quickly reconciled."—vi. 219. In the same spirit of consummate good sense was his counsel to Boswell, on another occasion: "Make the most and best of your lot, and compare yourself not with the few that are above you, but with the multitudes which are below you. Go steadily forward with lawful business or honest diversions." And see vi. 47. But among all the various proofs of Johnson's manly practical wisdom, I know none that affects me more than the remark he makes when, the year before Goldsmith's death, Boswell's troublesome kindness had reminded him of his birthday, and it occurs to him, after recalling a gloomy retrospect of threescore and four years, in which little has been done and little enjoyed, a life diversified by misery, spent part in the sluggishness of penury and part under the violence of pain, in gloomy discontent or importunate distress—"But perhaps I am better than I should have been if I had been less afflicted. With this I will try to be content."—*Letters to Mrs. Piozzi*, i. 134.

¹ Rochester expressed exactly the reverse of this in speaking of Shadwell, when he said that if he had burned all he wrote, and printed all he spoke, he would have had more wit and humor than any other poet; and measuring Goldsmith by Shadwell, we surely may rest perfectly satisfied with the relative accomplishments and deficiencies of each.

often gives the charm and the truth to his creations was the very thing over which he stumbled when he left the fanciful and walked into the real world. All then became patent, and a prey to critics the reverse of generous. He wore his heart upon his sleeve. "Sir, rather than not speak, he will talk of what he knows himself to be ignorant, which can only end in exposing him."¹ He could not conceal what was uppermost in his mind, says Davies; he blurted it out, says Johnson, to see what became of it. Thus when Hawkins tells us that he heard him say in company, "Yesterday I heard an excellent story and would relate it now if I thought any of you able to understand it,"² the idea conveyed is not an impertinence, but simply that the company, including Hawkins, *was* a very stupid one. Yet if we would have politeness perfectly defined, we have but to turn to the writings of the man who thus imperfectly practised it. Never was the distinction better put than where he tells us why ceremony should be different in every country, while true politeness is everywhere the same, because the former is but the artificial help which ignorance assumes to imitate the latter, which is the result of good sense and good-nature.³ Unhappily it was the best part of his own nature

¹ "I wonder," rejoined Boswell, who had drawn forth this remark by one of his own to the same effect, "if he feels that he exposes himself. If he was with two tailors"—"Or with two founders," said Johnson, interrupting him, "he would fall a-talking on the method of making cannon, though both of them would soon see that he did not know what metal a cannon is made of." We were, adds Boswell, "very social and merry in his room this forenoon."—iv. 309-310. But does not the last remark give us the clue to that conscious humor of exaggeration which was for the most part habitually indulged in by "the set" when any of Goldsmith's foibles came under remark?

² "The company laughed, and one of them said, 'Doctor, you are very rude,' but he made no apology. He once complained to a friend in these words: 'Mr. Martinelli is a rude man; I said, in his hearing, that there were no good writers among the Italians, and he said to one that sat near him that I was very ignorant.'"—*Sir John Hawkins*, as quoted by Mr. Mitford in his *Life*, clxxvi.

³ "A person possessed of those qualities, though he had never seen a court, is truly agreeable; and if without them, would continue a clown, though he had been all his life a gentleman usher."—*Citizen of the World*,

which he too often laid aside when he left the society of himself for that of his friends. "Good heavens, Mr. Foote," exclaimed a lively actress at the Haymarket, "what a humdrum kind of man Dr. Goldsmith appears to be in our green-room compared with the figure he makes in his poetry!" "The reason of that, madam," replied the manager, "is, because the Muses are better companions than the players."¹ Thinking his companions more stupid than his thoughts, it certainly was not his business to say so; yet he could not help awkwardly saying it. His mind relieved itself, as a necessity, of all that lay upon it. His kindly purposes and simple desires; his sympathies to assist others and his devices to make better appearance for himself; his innocent distrusts and amusing vanities; the sense of his own undeserved disadvantages and vexation at others' as undeserved success: everything sprang to his lips,² and it was only from himself he could conceal anything.

Even Burke could not spare that weakness, nor refrain from practising upon it, not very justifiably, for the amuse-

letter xxxix. I may remark that Northcote, the painter, one of the last celebrities in our day who could speak familiarly of Goldsmith and Johnson as of men he had known, exhibited just the reverse of the distinction noted in the text. "I have lived on his conversation," says Hazlitt, "with undiminished relish ever since I can remember—and one of his *tête-à-têtes* would at any time make an Essay; but he cannot himself write, because he loses himself in the connecting passages, is fearful of the effect, and wants the habit of bringing his ideas into one focus or point of view. . . . His conversation might be called *picture-talking*. He has always some pet allusion or anecdote. A young engraver came into his room the other day, with a print which he had put into the crown of his hat, in order not to crumple it, and he said it had been nearly blown away in passing along the street. 'You put me in mind,' said Northcote, 'of a bird-catcher at Plymouth, who used to put the birds he had caught into his hat to bring them home, and one day meeting my father in the road, he pulled off his hat to make him a low bow, and all the birds flew away.'"

¹ Cooke's *Memoirs of Foote*, iii. 78.

² One of the stories related of him is that he was dining one day in the city with a very wealthy carcass-butcher (doubtless one of his friends of the Wednesday Club), when, without attempting to conceal his amazement at the splendor of the house and the entertainment, he asked his host openly, before several strangers, how much a year he made by his business.—*European Magazine*, xix. 94.

ment of his friends. He and an Irish acquaintance (who lived to be Colonel O'Moore, to tell the anecdote to Mr. Croker, and perhaps to color it a little) were walking to dine one day with Reynolds, when, on arriving in Leicester Square, they saw Goldsmith, also on his way to the same dinner-party, standing near a crowd of people who were staring and shouting at some foreign women in the windows of one of the hotels. "Observe Goldsmith," said Burke to O'Moore, "and mark what passes between him and me by-and-by at Sir Joshua's." They passed on, and were soon joined at Reynolds's by Goldsmith, whom Burke affected to receive very coolly. "This seemed to vex poor Goldsmith," says the narrator of the story; and he begged Mr. Burke would tell him how he had had the misfortune to offend him. Burke appeared very reluctant to speak; but, after a good deal of pressing, said that "he was really ashamed to keep up an intimacy with one who could be guilty of such monstrous indiscretions as Goldsmith had just exhibited in the square." With great earnestness Goldsmith protested himself unconscious of what was meant. "Why," said Burke, "did you not exclaim, as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the crowd must be for staring with such admiration at those *painted Jezebels* while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?" "Surely, surely, my dear friend," exclaimed Goldsmith, horror-struck, "I did not say so?" "Nay," returned Burke, "if you had not said so, how should I have known it?" "That's true," answered Goldsmith, with great humility: "I am very sorry; it was very foolish. *I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it.*"¹ The anecdote is more creditable to Goldsmith, notwithstanding the weakness in his character it unquestionably reveals, than to Burke, to whose disadvantage it was probably afterwards remembered. It should be added that Burke had a turn for ridicule of that kind; and got up a more good-humored trick against Gold-

¹ Croker's *Boswell*, 141.

smith at his own house, not long after this, in which a lively kinswoman was played off as a raw Irish authoress, arrived expressly to see "the great Goldsmith," to praise him, and get his subscription to her poems, which, with liberal return of the praise (for several she had read out aloud), the simple poet gave, abusing them heartily the instant she was gone. Garrick founded a farce upon the incident, which, with the title of the "Irish Widow," was played in 1772.¹

Not always at a disadvantage, however, was Goldsmith in these social meetings. At times he took the lead, and kept it, to even Johnson's annoyance. "The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation," he would say on such occasions, "is this: he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man, it is a pity he is not rich, we may say of Goldsmith, it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself."² This is not the way to characterize the talk of an "idiot." Indeed, sometimes, when the humor suited him, he would put even Burke's talk at the same disadvantage as Goldsmith's. Mentioning the latter as not agreeable, because it was always for fame—"and the man who does so never can be pleasing; the man who talks to unburden his mind is the man to delight you"—he would add that "an eminent friend of ours" (so Boswell generally introduces Burke) was not so agreeable as the variety of his knowledge would otherwise make him, be-

¹ For the sake of one or two allusions in it worth preserving, I quote from a letter of Dr. Hoadly to Garrick (2d November, 1772) written on the occasion of this farce. "I hear your 'Irish Widow' was at first too Irish—*i. e.*, too impudent—and many defalcations were necessary. I see it goes on; but whether it runs or limps, I cannot judge. By the story of it in the *News*, the principal scene must be from the 'Mariage Forcé' of Molière; and the lady being her own champion, must, one would imagine, be from my farce of that name (the hint at least), which you remember I once read to you, in days of yore, at poor Peg Woffington's lodgings. A gentleman told me the other day that you had said you never saw such good *acting* as Beckford's when he made his speech to the King, at which you were present. Is it true? I have a reason for asking."—*Garrick Correspondence*, i. 489-490.

² *Boswell*, iii. 233.

cause he talked partly from ostentation;¹ and, before the words were forgotten (the next day, if in better humor), would not hesitate to put forth Burke's talk as emphatically the ebullition of his mind, as in no way connected with the desire of distinction, and indulged only because his mind was full.² Such remarks and comparisons at the least make it manifest that Goldsmith's conversation was not the folly which it is too often assumed to have been; though doubtless it was sometimes too ambitious, and fell short of the effort implied in it. He did not keep sufficiently in mind the precious advice for which Lady Pomfret was so grateful to the good old lady who gave it to her, When she had nothing to say, to say nothing.³ "I fired at them all, and did not make a hit; I angled all night, but I caught nothing!" was his own candid remark to little Cradock on one occasion.⁴ With a greater show of justice than he cared generally to afford him in this matter, Johnson laid his failure, on other occasions, rather to the want of temper than the want of power. "Goldsmith should not," he said, "be forever attempting to shine in conversation; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now, Goldsmith putting himself against another is like a man laying a hundred to one who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man's while. . . . When Goldsmith contends, if he gets the better it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation; if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."⁵

It should be added that there were other causes than these for Goldsmith's frequent vexation. Miss Reynolds relates that she overheard a gentleman at her brother's ta-

¹ *Boswell*, vii. 78.

² *Id.* viii. 155. Here he was contrasting Burke with Charles Fox, whom he held to have been somewhat spoiled as a talker in private by his extraordinary public success.

³ Lady Pomfret's *Letters*, ii. 161.

⁴ *Memoirs*, i. 281; iv. 280.

⁵ *Boswell*, iii. 273.

ble, to whom he was talking his best, suddenly stop him in the middle of a sentence with "Hush! hush! Dr. Johnson is going to say something."¹ The like was overheard (unless this be the original story adapted to her purpose by Miss Reynolds) at the first Academy dinner, when a Swiss named Moser, the first keeper appointed, interrupted him "when talking with fluent vivacity" to claim silence for Dr. Johnson, on seeing the latter roll himself as if about to speak ("Stay, stay, Doctor Shonson is going to say something"), and was paid back for his zeal by Goldsmith's retort, "And are you sure you'll *comprehend* what he says?"² His happy rebuke of a similar subserviency of Boswell's, that he was for turning into a monarchy what ought to be a republic, is recorded by Boswell himself,³ who adds, with that air of patronage which is now so exquisitely lu-

¹ "Dr. Johnson seemed to have much more kindness for Goldsmith than Goldsmith had for him. He always appeared to be overawed by Johnson, particularly when in company with people of any consequence, always as if impressed with some fear of disgrace; and, indeed, well he might. I have been witness to many mortifications he has suffered in Dr. Johnson's company."—Croker's *Boswell*, 881. I suspect the mortification described in the text, however, to be another instance of the compilation of this lady's Recollections from already existing anecdotes, and that her story is but another form of Boswell's. It seems to have been quite a trick with everybody that had lived in his time to repeat old stories of Goldsmith as occurrences within their own experience. Sir Herbert Croft, the author of *Love and Madness*, who died in Paris in 1816, represented himself to Charles Nodier as Oliver's greatest friend, though I do not find evidence of his having known him at all; and in his charming little memoir Nodier says: "Le chevalier Croft, qui avait été le meilleur ami de Goldsmith, et qui méritait bien de l'être, m'a dit souvent que le système de Goldsmith était d'obliger jusqu'au point de se mettre exactement dans la position de l'indigent qu'il avait secouru; et quand on lui reprochait ces libéralités imprudentes, par lesquelles il se substituait à la détresse d'un inconnu, il se contentait de répondre: 'J'ai des ressources, moi, et ce malheureux n'avait de ressources que moi.'"—16-17.

² Boswell adds, "This was, no doubt, very provoking, especially to one so irritable as Goldsmith, who frequently mentioned it with strong expressions of indignation."—iii. 301.

³ "One evening, in a circle of wits, he found fault with me for talking of Johnson as entitled to the honor of unquestionable superiority. 'Sir,' said he, 'you are for making a monarchy of what should be a republic.'" —iii. 300. That is surely very happily said.

dicrous, "For my part I like very well to hear honest Goldsmith talk away carelessly"; and upon the whole evidence it seems clear enough that, much as his talk suffered from his maladdress, in substance it was not in general below the average of that of other celebrated men. Certainly, therefore, if we concede some truth to the Johnsonian antithesis which even good-humored Langton repeats so complacently, "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had," we must yet admit it with due allowance. Walpole said much the same thing of Hume, whose writings he thought so superior to his conversation that he protested the historian understood nothing till he had written upon it;¹ and even of his friend Gray he said he was the worst company in the world, for he never talked easily; yet, in the sense of professed talk, the same might be said of the best company in the world, for, in the mere "cunning fence" of retort, Walpole himself talked ill, and so did Gay; and so did Dryden, Pope, and Swift; and so did Hogarth and Addison.²

Nothing is recorded of those men, or of others as famous, so clever as the specimens of the talk of Goldsmith which

¹ Pinkerton's *Correspondence*, i. 70.

² Pope says of Dryden in (Spence's *Anecdotes*) that he was "not very conversible"; and Dryden describes his own talk as "slow and dull." "As much company as I have kept," says Pope of himself, "and as much as I love it, I love reading better."—*Spence*, 45, Ed. 1820. Walpole describes one of the dullest days he ever passed to have been between "tragedy and comedy," when he had Gray and Hogarth to dine with him. The one wouldn't talk and the other couldn't. Gray "never converses easily," he said on another occasion; "all his words are measured and chosen, and formed into sentences."—*Collected Letters*, ii. 240. The remark in the text, it is at the same time to be remembered, applies to conversation in the sense of a professed art, and is not to be supposed to imply that these famous men, even though they were not expert at the cunning fence of talk, might not nevertheless be (as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu protests Addison was) "the best company in the world." Swift gives us not a bad idea of at least one quality which must have made Addison amusing company, in telling us that Stella had a trick which she learned from him, of always encouraging a man in absurdity, instead of endeavoring to extricate him. And see vol. iii. 80 (*note*).

Boswell himself has not cared to forget. Nay, even he goes so far as to admit that "he was often very fortunate in his witty contests, even when he entered the lists with Johnson himself." An immortal instance was remembered by Reynolds. He, Johnson, and Goldsmith were together one day, when the latter said that he thought he could write a good fable, mentioned the simplicity which that kind of composition requires, and observed that in most fables the animals introduced seldom talk in character. "For instance," said he, "the fable of the little fishes who saw birds fly over their heads, and, envying them, petitioned Jupiter to be changed into birds. The skill," he continued, "consists in making them talk like little fishes." At this point he observed Johnson shaking his sides and laughing, whereupon he made this home thrust. "Why, Mr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; for if *you* were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like WHALES."¹ This was giving

¹ The remark shows what a capital book Goldsmith's fairy stories for children would have been (see vol. ii. 39, *note*), and what a loss the nursery libraries of this kingdom have experienced. Failing this, however, they have certainly of late had a substitute well deserving of mention here, in Hans Andersen's *Fairy Tales*. I do not admire that writer's novels generally, but in his children's legends there seems to me to be a surprising sense of the variety of being that exists in the universe, and a subtle sympathy with it. So intimate a knowledge is conveyed to us of the feelings of ducks and ducklings, swans and storks, mermans and mermaids, nightingales, flowers, and daisies, even of slugs and cuttlefish, and of what all sorts of animated creatures round about us think, do, and might say if they could speak, that one begins to feel as Mrs. Gulliver did when her husband returned from Houynhnem land. Not only do Andersen's whales and little fishes and bulls talk all in character, but even his vegetables. His green peas have as much conversational character as his ducks and geese; nay, his very peg-tops and balls are full of individuality. A "daisy" with him is quite a sweet creature for the pathetic and pastoral beauty of her tongue; and one of his "leather balls" is of so aristocratical a character that when proposals are made to her by a "peg-top," because they happen to have been companions in the same drawer, she indignantly asks him whether he is aware that her "father and mother were morocco slippers," and that she has "cork in her body." Nor can I enough admire his picture of the stork parading about on his long red legs, discoursing in Egyptian, which language he had learned from his mother. Is not Egyptian the very language that by way of accomplishment a stork would know? But the prince of

Johnson what Garrick called a forcible hug,¹ and it shook laughter out of the big man in his own despite. But in truth no one, as Boswell has admitted, could take such "adventurous liberties" with the great social despot, "and escape unpunished."² Beauclerc tells us that on Goldsmith originating one day a project for a third theatre in London solely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authors from the supposed tyranny of managers (a project often renewed since, and always sure to fail, for the simple reason that authors themselves become managers, and all authors cannot be heard), Johnson treated it slightly: upon which the other retorted, "Ay, ay, this may be nothing to you, who can now shelter yourself behind the corner of a pension"; and Johnson bore it with perfect good-humor. But the most amusing instance connected with the pension occurred a year or two afterwards, when, on the appearance of Mason's exquisite *Heroic Epistle*,³ Goldsmith, delighted

all his stories, for its thorough illustration of the spirit of humbug and of the way in which the great and small vulgar agree to cant about what they do not believe, is the "Emperor's New Clothes," the idea of which Andersen seems to have found in an earlier German tale. I commend it to all readers.

¹ Boswell, iii. 274.

² Stockdale describes an argument between Johnson and Goldsmith at Tom Davies's dinner-table this year, in which, on the other hand, one may perceive the kind of subject into which the inferior disputant often blundered indiscreetly without the support of either knowledge or good taste. "Among other topics, Warburton claimed our attention. Goldsmith took a part against Warburton, whom Johnson strenuously defended with many strong arguments and with bright sallies of eloquence. Goldsmith ridiculously asserted that Warburton was a weak writer. This misapplied characteristic Dr. Johnson refuted. I shall never forget one of the happy metaphors with which he strengthened and illustrated his refutation. 'Warburton,' said he, 'may be absurd, but he will never be weak: he flounders well.' Goldsmith," adds Mr. Stockdale, "made a poor figure in conversation: in that exercise of the mind he was as indigent of force and expression as Johnson was superabundant in both."—Percival Stockdale's *Memoirs*, ii. 64.

³ Of this once so disputed authorship there is now no doubt, or that Walpole was privy to it all along. See *Correspondence of Mason and Walpole*, *passim*. Nichols tells us that, on Mason expressing offence at the King for having reflected on him with severity on some occasion, he remarked to him, "That is a trifle for you to say, who are the author of the

with it himself, carried it off to his friend, and was allowed to read it out to him from beginning to end with a running accompaniment of laughter,¹ in which Johnson as heartily joined at the invocation to George the Third's selected, and in part pilloried, pensioners, as at the encounter of Charles Fox with the Jews.

"Does Envy doubt? Witness, ye chosen train!
Who breathe the sweets of his Saturnian reign;
Witness ye Hills, ye JOHNSONS, Scots, Shebbeare's,
Hark to my call, for some of you have ears.
Let David Hume, from the remotest North,
In see-saw skeptic scruples hint his worth;
David, who there supinely deigns to lie
The fattest hog of Epicurus' sty!" etc.

When one of the most active of the second-rate politicians, and the great go-between of the attempted alliance between the Chatham and Rockingham Whigs, Tommy

Heroic Epistle"; on which Mason replied instantly, in a surly, nasal tone, which was not unusual to him, "I am told the King thinks so, and he is welcome."—Gray's *Works*, v. 40. It is very amusing now to read Percival Stockdale's remark in his *Memoirs* (ii. 88) on Mason's satire. "A piece of finer and more poignant poetical irony never was written. It was foolishly given by many people to Mason: it was totally different from his manner; its force, its acuteness, its delicacy, and urbanity of genius prove that he was incapable to write it. Yet he was absurdly and conceitedly offended with those who supposed him to be the author of it," etc. Johnson, of course, detested Mason for what he called his Whiggism and his priggism, but there were things in the *Heroic Epistle* which he would have liked even if he had known the writer, just as he persisted in admiring passages notwithstanding his dislike of its general tone, and freely forgave its laugh at himself for its equally hearty laugh at many of his favorite aversions.

¹ This was in 1773. See *Boswell*, viii. 90-91, and see *Coll. Lett.* v. 342. Mason was making but a poor return for this appreciation of his humor, when, falling into Walpole's tone in the course of their conferences about the *Epistle*, he writes *à propos* of one of the many "Postscripts" which its success elicited: "If I send for a new pamphlet, it is above a fortnight before it arrives. This was the case with the *Heroic Postscript*, which you mentioned in your last. But you did not tell me that I had the honor of being placed in the same line with Dr. Goldsmith; if you had, I should hardly have sent for it. However, I am more contented with my company than Garrick will be with his."—*Walpole and Mason Correspondence*, i. 131.

Townshend, so called not satirically but to distinguish him from his father, anticipated in the present year that connection of Johnson's and Shebbeare's names (I formerly described them pensioned together, "the He-Bear and the She-Bear," as some one humorously said), he did not get off so easily. But Johnson had brought these allusions on himself by plunging into party war, at the opening of the year, with a pamphlet on the *False Alarm*, as he called the excitement on Wilkes's expulsion, in which he did not spare the opposition, and which, written in two nights at Thrale's,¹ continued to attract attention. Boswell tells us that when Townshend made the attack, Burke, though of Townshend's party, stood warmly forth in defence of his friend; but the recent publication of the *Cavendish Debates* corrects this curious error. Burke spoke after Townshend, and complained of the infamous private libels of the *Town and Country Magazine* against members of the opposition, but he did not refer to Townshend's attack; he left the vindication of Johnson to their common friend Fitzherbert, who rose with an emphatic eulogy at the close of the debate and called him "a pattern of morality." In truth, Burke had this year committed himself too fiercely to the stormy side of opposition to be able to stretch his hand across even to his old friend Johnson. His friend had cast his lot with the enemies of freedom, and was left to fare with them. An unsparing vehemence in the House of Commons now strikingly contrasted with his calm philosophic severity in the press. He was charged with want of common candor, and he denounced the sickly habit. "Virtues are not to be sacrificed to candor."² He was re-

¹ "Between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve on Thursday night."—Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, 41. It was not long after this that the jolly landlord of the inn close by Chatsworth, in answer to Boswell's question of affected ignorance as to who "the celebrated Dr. Johnson" was that he was boasting to have had in his house, "Sir," said he, "Johnson, the great writer; Oddity, as they call him. He's the greatest writer in England; he writes for the ministry; he has a correspondence abroad, and let's them know what's going on."—*Boswell*, vii. 30.

² *Cavendish Debates*, i. 276. How well and wisely he continues! "To

proached for his following of certain leaders, and he made the reproach his glory. "When I find good men, I will cling to them, adhere to them, follow them in and out, wash the very feet they stand on. I will wash their feet and be subservient, not from interest, but from principle. It shall be my glory."¹ Those leaders were still the Rockinghams, but not so isolated as of old. There were yet dissensions between the rival parties of opposition, but not such as withheld them from concentrating, for this one while at least, the hate and bitterness of both on the government. The Grenvilles had too great a grudge against the Bedfords too freely to indulge at its expense their grudge against the Rockinghams; Chatham had suffered too bitterly for his own mistake to continue his feud with either; and the Rockinghams themselves, content with Burke's masterly *Observations*² defending them against Grenville's finance, had waived their dislike of Wilkes, and backed even faction in the city and Lord Temple in the upper house. The excitement was unexampled.³ Desertion on either side was denounced as the worst of crimes. Language unheard till now was launched from both houses at the government. Lord Shelburne dared the Premier to find "a wretch so base and mean-spirited" as to take the seals Lord Camden had flung down. In evil hour, poor Charles Yorke, Lord Rockingham's attorney-general, and sensitive as he was accomplished, accepted the challenge; and then, maddened by his own reproaches, perished within two days, his patent of peerage lying incomplete before him. Chatham rose in his place in the Lords to a height of daring which even he had never reached, and, resolving to be

mix a little truth and falsehood, a little right and wrong, that is a disposition in all men; a fault in all public men of the great world."

¹ *Cavendish Debates*, i. 277.

² *Works*, i. 213.

³ In the midst of it it is not unamusing or uninteresting to lend an ear now and then to Horace Walpole. "Everybody talks of the constitution, but all sides forget that the constitution is extremely well, and would do very well, if they would but let it alone. Indeed, it must be a strong constitution, considering how long it has been quacked and doctored."—*Letters to Mann*, ii. 71-72.

"a scarecrow of violence to the gentle warblers of the grove, the moderate Whigs and temperate statesmen,"¹ prayed that rather than any compromise should now be made, or the people should veil their representative rights to their governors, either the question might be brought to practical issue or *Discord prevail forever!* Grafton sank beneath the storm even bodily disabled for his office by the attacks of "Junius"; and his place was filled by Lord North. But "Junius" gathered strength the stronger the opponent that faced him; and his terrors increased as preparation was made to cope with them. His libels conquered the law. Language which Burke told the house he had read with chilled blood juries sent away unconvicted.² In vain were printers hunted down, and small booksellers, and even humble milkmen. In vain did "the whole French court, with their gaudy coaches and jack-boots," go out to hunt the little hare. The great boar of the forest, as Burke called the libeller, still, and always, broke through the toils; and sorry was the sport of following after vermin. North could not visit the palace without seeing the *Letter to the King* posted up against the wall; the Chief Justice could not enter *his* court without seeing the *Letter to Lord Mansfield* impudently facing him.³ There was no safety in sending poor milkmen to prison. There was no protection. The thrust was mortal; but a rapier and a ruffle alone were visible in the dark alley from which it came.

¹ *Chatham Correspondence*, iii. 469.

² "What is it that has wrought so great a change in the temper and disposition of the people that they now countenance the most audacious, the most wicked libels?"—Burke, *Cavendish Debates*, ii. 106.

³ "Shall I state the miserable condition of the Judge in Westminster Hall? He has a mace, and a train-bearer; yet, on both sides of the hall are seen posted up, 'Junius's' *Letter to Lord Chief Justice Mansfield*. I tell you that neither their maces nor their train-bearers can make the judges respected while these things are endured. . . . But you cannot punish."—Burke, *Cavendish Debates*, ii. 107.

CHAPTER VII

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

1770

BENEATH these dark and desperate struggles of party profligacy the more peaceful current of life meanwhile flowed on and had its graces and enjoyments; not the least of them from Goldsmith's hand. "This day at 12," said the *Public Advertiser* of the 26th of May, "will be published, price two shillings, *The Deserted Village*, a Poem. By Doctor Goldsmith. Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick's Head in Catherine Street, Strand." Its success was instant and decisive. A second edition was called for on the 7th of June, a third on the 14th, a fourth (carefully revised) on the 28th, and on the 16th of August a fifth edition appeared. Even Goldsmith's enemies in the press were silent, and nothing interrupted the praise which greeted him on all sides. One tribute he did not hear, and was never conscious of; yet from truer heart or finer genius he had none, and none that should have given him greater pride. Gray was passing the summer at Malvern, the last summer of his life,¹ with his friend

¹ He died suddenly at Cambridge in the summer of 1771, in his fifty-fifth year. See Walpole's *Letters to Mann*, ii. 171. It is pleasant to quote his last letter to Walpole, written a few weeks before. "Atheism is a vile dish, though all the cooks of France combine to make new sauces to it. As to the soul, perhaps they may have none on the Continent, but I do think we have such things in England; Shakespeare, for example, I believe had several to his share." Nor can I say farewell to one with whose wit and wisdom I have enriched so many of these pages without borrowing from his commonplace-book what I have always thought as delicate a critical remark as ever was made. "In former times, they loved, I will

Nichols, when the poem came out; and he desired Nichols to read it aloud to him. He listened to it with fixed attention, and soon exclaimed, "*This man is a poet.*"¹

The judgment has since been affirmed by hundreds of thousands of readers, and any adverse appeal is little likely now to be lodged against it. Within the circle of its claims and pretensions a more entirely satisfactory and delightful poem than the *Deserted Village* was probably never written. It lingers in the memory where once it has entered; and such is the softening influence, on the heart even more than the understanding, of the mild, tender, yet clear light which makes its images so distinct and lovely, that there are few who have not wished to rate it higher than poetry of yet higher genius. "What true and pretty pastoral images," exclaimed Burke, years after the poet's death, "has Goldsmith in his *Deserted Village*! They beat all: Pope, and Philips, and *Spenser too*, in my opinion."² But opinions that appear exaggerated may, in truth, be often reconciled to very sober sense;

not say tediousness, but length, and a train of circumstances in a narration. The vulgar do so still: it gives an air of reality to the facts, it fixes the attention, raises and keeps in suspense their expectation, and supplies the place of their little and lifeless imagination; and it keeps pace with the slow motion of their own thoughts. Tell them a story as you would to a man of wit; it will appear to them as an object seen in the night by a flash of lightning; but when you have placed it in various lights and various positions, they will come at last to see and feel it as well as others. But we need not confine ourselves to the vulgar and to understandings beneath our own. *Circumstance* ever was, and ever will be, the essence both of poetry and oratory. It has in some sort the same effect upon every mind that it has upon that of the populace; and I fear the quickness and delicate impatience of these polished times are but the forerunners of the decline of all those beautiful arts which depend upon the imagination. . . . Homer, the father of *circumstance*, has occasion for the same apology." As I transcribe this passage a return is published of the results of the first year's experience of the Manchester Free Library, from which it appears that no books of any class have excelled in popularity, as tested by the frequency of the demand made for them, the novels of De Foe. The secret of this is explained by Gray. 1853.

¹ *Works*, v. 36. "He thought Goldsmith a genuine poet," Mr. Nichols adds.

² "That is," Burke adds, "in the pastoral, for I go no farther."—Letter to Shackleton, 6th May, 1780. *Correspondence*, ii. 347.

and, where any extraordinary popularity has existed, good reason is generally to be shown for it. Of the many clever, and indeed wonderful, writings that from age to age are poured forth into the world, what is it that puts upon the few the stamp of immortality, and makes them seem as indestructible as nature? What is it but their wise rejection of everything superfluous?—being grave histories, or natural stories, of everything that is *not* history or nature? being poems, of everything that is *not* poetry, however much resembling it; and especially of that prodigal accumulation of thoughts and images which, until properly sifted and selected, is as the unhewn to the chiselled marble? What is it, in short, but the unity, completeness, polish, and perfectness in every part, which Goldsmith attained? It may be said that his range is limited, and that, whether in his poetry or his prose, he seldom wanders far from the ground of his own experience; but within that circle how potent is his magic, what a command it exercises over the happiest forms of art, with what a versatile grace it moves between what saddens us in humor or smiles on us in grief, and how unerring our response of laughter or of tears! Thus, his pictures may be small; may be far from historical pieces, amazing or confounding us; may be even, if severest criticism will have it so, mere happy *tableaux de genre* hanging up against our walls: but their colors are exquisite and unfading; they have that universal expression which never rises higher than the comprehension of the humblest, yet is ever on a level with the understanding and appreciation of the loftiest; they possess that familiar sweetness of household expression which wins them welcome, alike where the rich inhabit and in huts where poor men lie; and there, improving and gladdening all, they are likely to hang forever.

Johnson, though he had taken equal interest in the progress of this second poem, contributing to the manuscript the four lines which stand last, yet thought it inferior to the *Traveller*. Time has not confirmed *that* judgment. Were it only that the field of contemplation in the *Traveller* is somewhat

desultory, and that (as a later poet pointed out) its successor has an endearing locality, and introduces us to beings with whom the imagination is ready to contract a friendship, the higher place must be given to the *Deserted Village*. Goethe tells us the transport with which the circle he now lived in hailed it when they found themselves once more as in another beloved Wakefield; and with what zeal he at once set to work to translate it into German.¹ All the characteristics of the first poem seem to me developed in the second, with as chaste a simplicity, with as choice a selectness of natural expression, in verse of as musical cadence, but with yet greater earnestness of purpose and a far more human interest. On the other hand, it is subject to the remark, which, indeed, has been made against it, not merely that it is founded on false reasoning, but that, in order to support its theory, things which could never have co-existed

¹ The passage from his *Autobiography* is well worth quoting: "A little poem, which we passionately received into our circle, allowed us from henceforward to think of nothing else. Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* necessarily delighted every one at that grade of cultivation, in that sphere of thought. Not a living and active, but a departed, vanished existence was described; all that one so readily looked upon, that one loved, prized, sought passionately in the present, to take part in it with the cheerfulness of youth. Highdays and holydays in the country, church consecrations and fairs, the solemn assemblage of the elders under the village lindentree, supplanted in its turn by the lively delight of youth in dancing, while the more educated classes show their sympathy. How seemingly did these pleasures appear, moderated as they were by an excellent country pastor, who understood how to smooth down and remove all that went too far, that gave occasion to quarrel and dispute. Here again we found an honest Wakefield, in his well-known circle, yet no longer in his living bodily form, but as a shadow recalled by the soft mournful tones of the elegiac poet. The very thought of this picture is one of the happiest possible, when once the design is formed to evoke once more an innocent past with a graceful melancholy. And in this kindly endeavor how well has the Englishman succeeded in every sense of the word! I shared the enthusiasm for this charming poem with Gotter, who was more felicitous than myself with the translation undertaken by us both; for I had too painfully tried to imitate in our language the delicate significance of the original, and thus had well agreed with single passages, but not with the whole."—*Truth and Poetry from my own Life* (translated by Mr. Oxenford), i. 474. And see *Id.* i. 506.

are brought together,¹ and a village is described in its prosperity which could never have been the same described in its decay. To this Goldsmith would doubtless have said what he said to the friend he described his plan to, just after the poem was begun. "I remember it in my own country, and have seen it in this." He would have been indifferent to the objection, if even able to see it. As his plan had regard to neither country singly, he would have claimed equal independence for what in his own view its execution might require; and, in truth, this fairly brings us back to the consideration that it is the purpose and design of the poem which must really bear the brunt of the objection made even to the method of working it out.

Nor is that purpose to be lightly dismissed because it more concerns the heart than the understanding, and is sentimental rather than philosophical. The accumulation of wealth has *not* brought about man's diminution, nor is trade's proud empire threatened with decay; but too eager are the triumphs of both to be always conscious of evils attendant on even the benefits they bring; and of those it was the poet's purpose to remind us. The lesson can never be thrown away. No material prosperity can be so great but that underneath it, and indeed because of it, will not still be found much suffering and sadness, much to remember that is commonly forgotten, much to attend to that is almost always neglected. Trade would not thrive the less, though shortened somewhat of its unfeeling train, nor

¹ Macaulay has put this most forcibly. "It is made up of incongruous parts. "The village in its happy days is a true English village. The village in its decay is an Irish village. The felicity and the misery which Goldsmith has brought close together belong to two different countries, and to two different stages in the progress of society. He had assuredly never seen in his native island such a rural paradise, such a seat of plenty, content, and tranquillity, as his Auburn. He had assuredly never seen in England all the inhabitants of such a paradise turned out of their homes in one day and forced to emigrate in a body to America. The hamlet he had probably seen in Kent: the ejectment he had probably seen in Munster; but by joining the two he has produced something which never was and never will be seen in any part of the world."—*Biographical Essays*, 65.

wealth enjoy fewer blessings, if its unwieldy pomp less often spurned the cottage from the green. "It is a melancholy thing to stand alone in one's country," said the Lord Leicester who built Holkham, when complimented on the completion of that princely dwelling. "I look round ; not a house is to be seen but mine. I am the giant of Giant Castle, and have eaten up all my neighbors."¹ There is no man who has risen upward in the world, even by ways the most honorable to himself and kindly to others, who may not be said to have a deserted village, sacred to the tenderest and fondest recollections, which it is well that his fancy and his feeling should at times revisit.

Goldsmith looked into his heart, and wrote. From that great city in which his hard-spent life had been diversified with so much care and toil, he travelled back to the memory of lives more simply passed, of more cheerful labor, of less anxious care, of homely affections and humble joys for which the world and all its successes offer nothing in exchange. There are few things in the range of English poetry more deeply touching than the closing image of these lines, the hunted creature panting to its home!

"In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amid these humble bowers to lay me down ;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting, by repose.
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amid the swains to show my book-learned skill ;
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw ;
And, as an hare whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last."²

¹ When asked who was his nearest neighbor, he replied, "The King of Denmark."—Potter's *Observations on the Poor Laws*, quoted in Campbell's *British Poets* (Ed. 1841), 526.

² This thought was continually at his heart. In his hardly less beautiful prose he has said the same thing more than once, for, as I have elsewhere

That hope is idle for him. Sweet Auburn is no more. But though he finds the scene deserted, for us he peoples it anew; builds up again its ruined haunts and revives its pure enjoyments; from the glare of crowded cities, their exciting struggles and palling pleasures, carries us back to the season of natural pastimes and unsophisticated desires; adjures us all to remember, in our several smaller worlds, the vast world of humanity that breathes beyond; shows us that there is nothing too humble for the loftiest and most affecting associations, and that where human joys and interests have been, their memory is sacred forever!

"Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace,
The parlor splendors of that festive place:
The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door,
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay,
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Rang'd o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.
Vain transitory splendors! Could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall!

remarked, no one ever borrowed from himself oftener or more unscrupulously than Goldsmith did. "A city like this," he writes in letter ciii. of the *Citizen of the World*, "is the soil for great virtues and great vices. . . . There are no pleasures, sensual or sentimental, which this city does not produce; yet, I know not how, I could not be content to reside here for life. There is something so seducing in that spot in which we first had existence that nothing but it can please. Whatever vicissitudes we experience in life, however we toil, or wheresoever we wander, our fatigued wishes still recur to home for tranquillity; we long to die in that spot which gave us birth, and in that pleasing expectation find an opiate for every calamity." The poet Waller, too, wished to die "like the stag where he was roused."—*Johnson*, iii. 338.

Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.
Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm than all the gloss of art."

With darker shadows from the terrible and stony truths that are written in the streets of cities the picture is afterwards completed; and here, too, the poet painted from himself. His own experience, the suffering for which his heart had always bled, the misery his scanty purse was always ready to relieve, are in his contrast of the pleasures of the great with the innocence and the health too often murdered to obtain them. It was this sympathy with the very poor, strongly underlying the most part of all he wrote, though seldom appearing on the surface in any formal political opinion, which seems to have struck his more observing critics as the master-peculiarity in his modes and tendencies of thinking; and hence it may have been that the impression of him, formed in the girlhood of the daughter of his attached friend, Lord Clare, often repeated in her advanced age to her son, Lord Nugent, and by him communicated to me, was "that he was a strong republican in principle, and would have been a very dangerous writer if he had lived to the times of the French revolution." Nor is it difficult to understand how such thoughts and fears came in such quarters to be connected with him, if we merely observe, to take an instance from one of his later books¹ in addition to

¹ *Animated Nature*, iv. 158. He is speaking of the partridge, and remarks of it that "it is still a favorite delicacy at the tables of the rich; and

others already named, the uncompromising tone of opinion he doubtless never hesitated to indulge, at Lord Clare's table, or wherever he might be, on such a subject as the game laws. It is certain, with reference to the lines I am about to quote, that several "distinguished friends" strongly objected to the views implied in them; but he let them stand. They would, perhaps, as strongly have objected to what was not uncommon with himself, the abandoning his rest at night to give relief to the destitute. They would have thought the parish should have done what a yet more distinguished friend, Samuel Johnson, once did, and which will probably be remembered when all he wrote or said shall have passed away: his picking up a wretched ruined girl, who lay exhausted on the pavement, "in the lowest state of vice, poverty, and disease"; taking her upon his back, carrying her to his house, and placing her in his bed; not harshly upbraiding her; taking care of her, with all tenderness, for a long time;

the desire of keeping it to themselves has induced them to make laws for its preservation, no way harmonizing with the general spirit of English legislation. What can be more arbitrary than to talk of preserving the game, which, when defined, means no more than that the poor shall abstain from what the rich have taken a fancy to keep for themselves? If these birds could, like a cock or hen, be made legal property; could they be taught to keep within certain districts, and only fed on those grounds that belong to the man whose entertainments they improve; it then might, with some show of justice, be admitted, that as a man fed them, so he might claim them. But this is not the case; nor is it in any man's power to lay a restraint upon the liberty of these birds, that, when let loose, put no limits to their excursions. They feed everywhere, upon every man's ground; and no man can say, These birds are fed only by me. Those birds which are nourished by all belong to all; nor can any one man, nor any set of men, lay claim to them when still continuing in a state of nature. I never walked out about the environs of Paris that I did not consider that the immense quantity of game that was running almost tame on every side of me, as a badge of the slavery of the people; and what they wished me to observe as an object of triumph, I always regarded with a kind of secret compassion; yet these people have no game laws for the remoter parts of the kingdom; the game is only preserved in a few places for the King, and is free in most places else. In England the prohibition is general; and the peasant has not a right to what even slaves, as he is taught to call them, are found to possess."

and endeavoring, on her restoration to health, to put her in a virtuous way of living.¹

“Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deckt, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e’er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts?—Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless, shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer’s door she lays her head,
And pinch’d with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel, and robes of country brown.”

Beautifully is it said by Mr. Campbell that “fiction in poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanted resemblance; and this ideal beauty of nature has seldom been united with so much sober fidelity as in the groups and scenery of the *Deserted Village*.” It is to be added that everything in it is English, the feeling, incidents, descriptions, and allusions; and that this consideration may save us needless trouble in seeking to identify sweet Auburn (a name he obtained from Langton) with Lissoy. Scenes of the poet’s youth had doubtless risen in his memory as he wrote, mingling with, and taking altered hue from, later experiences; thoughts of those early days could scarcely have been absent from the wish for a quiet close to the struggles and toil of his mature life, and very possibly, nay almost certainly, when the dream of such a retire-

¹ Boswell, viii. 323-324.

ment haunted him, Lissoy formed part of the vision; it is even possible he may have caught the first hint of his design from a local Westmeath poet and schoolmaster,¹ who, in his youth, had given rhymed utterance to the old tenant grievances of the Irish rural population; nor could complaints that were also loudest in those boyish days at Lissoy, of certain reckless and unsparing evictions by which one General Naper (Napper, or Napier) had persisted in improving his estate, have passed altogether from Goldsmith's memory.²

¹ Lawrence Whyte, who published (1741) a poem in whose list of subscribers appears Allan Ramsay's name, which describes with some pathos the sufferings of dispossessed Irish tenantry.

"Their native soil were forc'd to quit,
So Irish landlords thought it fit. . . .
How many villages they razed,
How many parishes laid waste!"

² The earliest and most intelligent attempt to identify Lissoy and Auburn was made in 1807 by Dr. Streat, Henry Goldsmith's successor in the curacy of Kilkenny West, but, at the time he wrote this letter, perpetual curate of Athlone. I quote it as the first and best outline of all that has since been very elaborately and very needlessly said on the same subject: "The poem of the *Deserted Village* took its origin from the circumstance of General Robert Napper (the grandfather of the gentleman who now lives in the house, within half a mile of Lissoy, and built by the General) having purchased an extensive tract of the country surrounding Lissoy, or *Auburn*; in consequence of which many families, here called cottiers, were removed, to make room for the intended improvements of what was now to become the wide domain of a rich man, warm with the idea of changing the face of his new acquisition; and were forced, 'with fainting steps,' to go in search of 'torrid tracts' and 'distant climes.' This fact alone might be sufficient to establish the seat of the poem; but there cannot remain a doubt in any unprejudiced mind when the following are added—namely, the character of the village preacher, the above-named Henry, is copied from nature. He is described exactly as he lived, and his 'modest mansion' as it existed. Burn, the name of the village master, and the site of his school-house; and Catherine Giraghty, a lonely widow,

'The wretched matron, forc'd in age for bread
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread'

(and to this day the brook and ditches near the spot where her cabin stood abound with cresses); still remain in the memory of the inhabitants, and Catherine's children live in the neighborhood. The pool, the busy mill, the house where 'nut-brown draughts inspired,' are still visited as the poetic scene; and the 'hawthorn-bush,' growing in an open space in front

But there was nothing local in his present aim ; or if there was, it was the rustic life and rural scenery of England. It is quite natural that Irish enthusiasts should have found out the fence, the furze, the thorn, the decent church, the never-failing brook, the busy mill, even the Twelve Good Rules and the Royal Game of Goose.¹ It was to be ex-

of the house, which I knew to have three trunks, is now reduced to one, the other two having been cut, from time to time, by persons carrying pieces of it away to be made into toys, etc., in honor of the bard and of the celebrity of his poem. All these contribute to the same proof ; and the 'decent church' which I attended for upwards of eighteen years, and which 'tops the neighboring hill,' is exactly described as seen from Lissoy, the residence of the preacher."—Dr. Streaton to the Rev. Edward Mangin, writing from the Glebe, Athlone, on December 31, 1807. *Essay on Light Reading*, 140-143.

¹ "A lady from the neighborhood of Portglenone, in the county of Antrim, was one of those who visited the Deserted Village in the summer of 1817 ; and was fortunate enough to find, in a cottage adjoining the ale-house, an old smoked print, which she was credibly informed was the identical Twelve Good Rules that had ornamented that rural tavern, with the Royal Game of Goose, etc., when Goldsmith drew his fascinating description of it."—*Gentleman's Magazine* (1818), lxxxviii. 20. The "identical" old smoked print was doubtless Mr. Hogan's. "When I settled on the spot," said that gentleman, giving account of what he had done, to a public meeting held in Ballymahon in 1819 to set on foot a subscription for a monument to Goldsmith's memory, "I attempted to replace some of the almost forgotten identities that delighted me forty years since. I rebuilt his 'Three Jolly Pigeons,' restored his Twelve Good Rules and Royal Game of Goose, inclosed his Hawthorn Tree, now almost cut away by the devotion of the literary pilgrims who resort to it ; I also planted his favorite hill before Lissoy Gate," etc.—*Gentleman's Magazine* (1820), xc. 618-622. The proposed monument failed, notwithstanding the honorable enthusiasm of Mr. Hogan, the Rev. John Graham, its originator, and others. I may add that soon after Mr. Hogan began his restorations an intelligent visitor described them ; and nothing, he said, so shook his faith in the reality of Auburn as the got-up print, the fixed tea-cups, and so forth. But what had once been Charles and Henry Goldsmith's parsonage at Lissoy, the lower chamber of which he found inhabited by pigs and sheep and the drawing-room by oats, was yet so placed in relation to objects described in the poem as somewhat to restore his shaken belief. He adds that, in the cabin of the quondam schoolmaster, an oak chair with a back and seat of cane, purporting to be "the chair of the poet," was shown him, apparently kept "rather for the sake of drawing contributions from the curious than from any reverence for the bard. There is," he humorously adds, "no fear of its being worn out by the devout

pected that pilgrims should have borne away every vestige of the first hawthorn they could lay their hands on. It was very graceful and pretty amusement for Mr. Hogan, when he settled in the neighborhood, to rebuild the village inn, and, for security against the enthusiasm of predatory pilgrims, to fix in the wall "the broken tea-cups wisely kept for show"; to fence round with masonry what still remained of the hawthorn; to prop up the tottering walls of what was once the parish school; and to christen his furnished-up village and adjoining mansion by the name of Auburn. All this, as Walter Scott has said, "is a pleasing tribute to the poet in the land of his fathers";¹ but it certainly is no more.

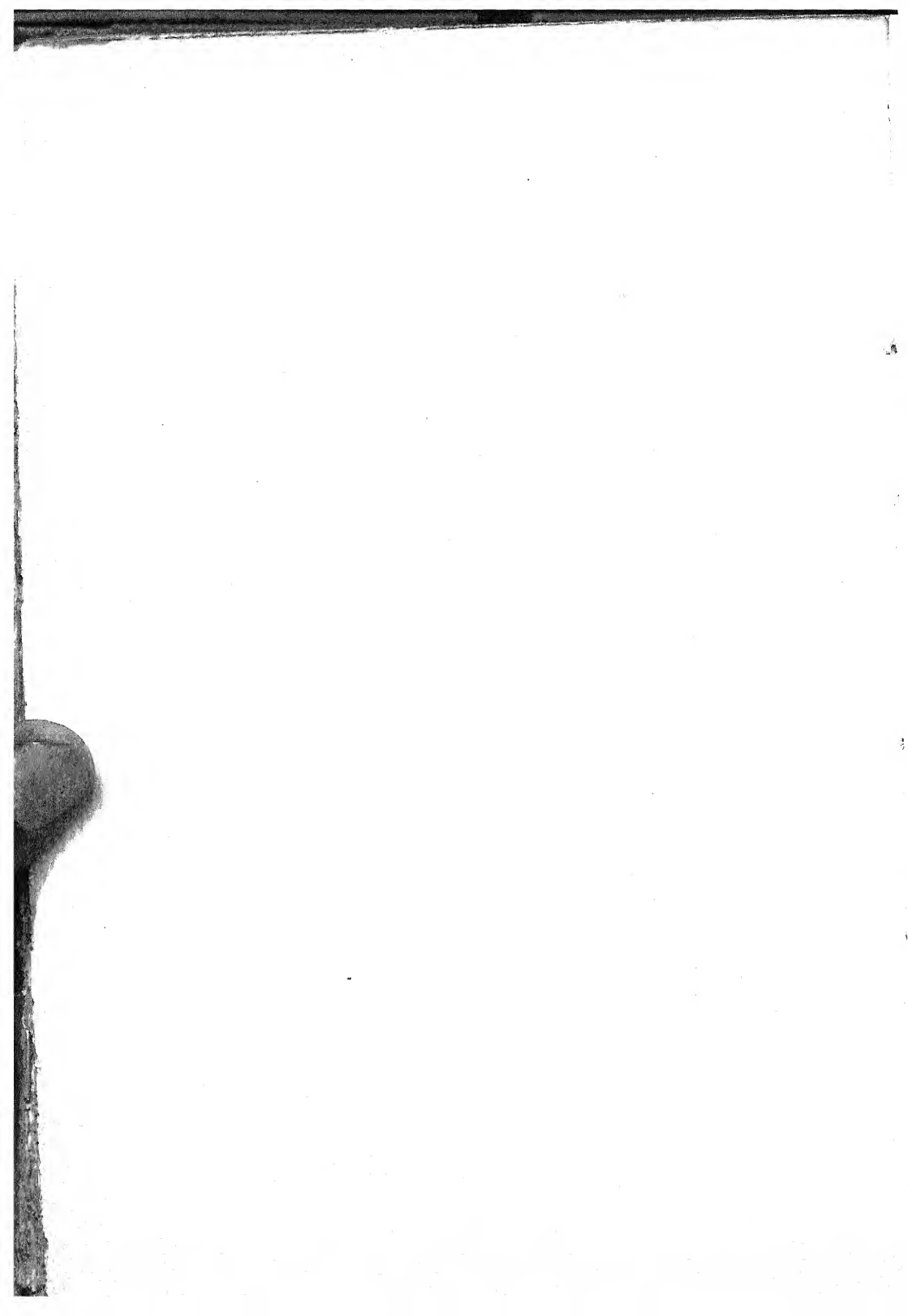
Such tribute as the poem itself was, its author offered to Sir Joshua Reynolds, dedicating it to him in a few words that are very beautiful.² "Setting interest aside," he wrote, "to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this Poem to you." How gratefully this was received, and how strongly it cemented an already

earnestness of sitters, as the cocks and hens have usurped undisputed possession of it, and protest most clamorously against all attempts to get it cleansed or to seat oneself."—Appendix to vol. iv. of the Edinburgh edition of Goldsmith's *Works* (1836), 317-318. A very careful and good little book. Its editor, I believe, was Mr. Hamilton Buchanan.

¹ Colman the younger has recorded a more extraordinary tribute in the land of his adoption. "One day I met the poet Harding at Oxford, a half-crazy creature, as poets generally are, with a huge broken brick, and some bits of thatch upon the crown of his hat. On my asking him for a solution of this Prosopopeia, 'Sir,' said he, 'to-day is the anniversary of the celebrated Dr. Goldsmith's death, and I am now in the character of his *Deserted Village*.'"—*Random Records*, i. 307.

² A remembrance has been pointed out (Tiffin's *Gossip about Portraits*, 1866, p. 87) between this touching inscription and Bacon's dedication of his *Essays* to Sir John Constable. "My last Essaies I dedicated to my deare brother Master Anthony Bacon. . . . Missing my brother, I found you next." Comparing the two in their complete form, however, the similarity is seen to be merely accidental; and in nothing, it may be remarked, was Goldsmith happier than in all his dedications.

Thomas Chatterton



fast friendship, needs not be said. The great painter could not rest till he had made public acknowledgment and return. He painted his picture of "Resignation," had it engraved by Thomas Watson, and inscribed upon it these words: "This attempt to express a character in the *Deserted Village* is dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith, by his sincere friend and admirer, Joshua Reynolds." Nor were tributes to the poet's growing popularity wanting from foreign admirers. Within two years from its publication the first foreign translation appeared, and obtained grateful recognition under Goldsmith's hand.¹

What Griffin paid for the poem is very doubtful. Glover first tells, and Cooke repeats with additions, the story which Walter Scott also believed and repeated, that he had stipulated for a hundred pounds as the price, and returned part of it on some one telling him that five shillings a couplet was more than any poetry ever written was worth, and could only ruin the poor bookseller who gave it;² but this is by no means credible, though a good authority tells us it would have been "quite in character." Not only in itself is it highly incredible, but it is, perhaps, of all possible speeches the very last that a man is likely to have made, who only a few weeks before had not scrupled to take five hundred guineas from the same publisher on the mere faith of a book which he had hardly even begun to write. It is presumable, however, that the sum actually paid was small; and that it was not without reason he told Lord Lisburn, on

¹ This was not the translation mentioned by Lord Holland to Thomas Moore. "Lord Holland mentioned a translation of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* by a foreigner, whom I remember in London, called the Comman-deur de Tilly, and the line 'As ocean sweeps the labor'd mole away,' was done 'Comme la mer détruit les travaux de la taupe.'"—Thomas Moore's *Diary*, December 30, 1818. Goethe tried his hand at a translation into German, as we have seen, but did not please himself.

² *Poems*. Malone's Dublin Ed. (1777), vi. *European Magazine*, xxiv. 172. "In truth," replied Goldsmith, according to Glover's version, "I think so too; it is much more than the honest man can afford, or the piece is worth; I have not been easy since I received it; I will, therefore, go back and return him his note."

² *Percy Memoir*, 85.

receiving complimentary inquiries after a new poem at the Academy dinner: "I cannot afford to court the draggle-tail muses, my lord; they would let me starve; but by my other labors I can make shift to eat, and drink, and have good clothes."¹ Something to the same effect, indeed, in the poem itself had mightily stirred the comment and curiosity of the critics. They called them excellent but "alarming lines."

"And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!"

Apollo and the Muses forbid! was the general cry of the reviews. What! shall the writer of such a poem as this, "the subject of a young and generous king, who loves, cherishes, and understands the fine arts,"² shall *he* be obliged to drudge for booksellers, shall *he* be starved into abandonment of poetry? Even so. There was no help for it; and truly it became him to be grateful that there were booksellers to drudge for. "The poverty of authors is a common observation, but not always a true one. No author can be poor who understands the arts of booksellers. Without this necessary knowledge the greatest genius may starve, and with it the greatest dunce live in splendor. This knowledge I have pretty well dipped into."³ Thus, in this very month

¹ *Life* prefixed to Bewick's edition of the *Poems* (Gloucester, 1809), 11. The incident is also related in a number of the *Gentleman's Magazine* of earlier date, but I have lost the reference.

² Letter in the *St. James's Chronicle*, dated from Oxford on the 12th July, and signed J. B., ending with some verses which the writer calls the "overflowing of his mind on the occasion," so very execrable that the credit of them has been given to Boswell.

³ So Chatterton, in a letter to his mother. Poor fellow! one cannot

of May, 1770, the most eager young aspirant for literary fame that ever trod the flinty streets of London, poor Chatterton, was writing home to his country friends. But, alas! *his* lip was not wetted with the knowledge which he fancied he had dipped so deep into. With Goldsmith it was otherwise. He had drunk long and weary draughts, had tasted alike the sweetness and bitterness of the cup, and, no longer sanguine or ambitious, had yet reason to confess himself not wholly discontented. In many cases it is better to want than to have, and in almost all it is better to want than to ask. At the least, he *could* make shift, as he said to Lord Lisburn, to eat, and drink, and have good clothes. The days which had now come to him were not splendid, but neither were they starving days; and they had also brought him such respectful hearing that of what his really starving days had been he could now dare to speak out in the hope of saving others.¹ He lost no opportunity

quote it, still vibrating in every word with its writer's irrepressible hopes, and not feel a sickness of pain at the heart! "I am settled, and in such a settlement as I would desire. I get four guineas a month by one magazine: shall engage to write a History of England and other pieces, which will more than double that sum. Occasional essays for the daily papers would more than support me. What a glorious prospect! . . . I am quite familiar at the Chapter coffee-house, and know all the geniuses there. A character is now unnecessary; an author carries his character in his pen. My sister will improve herself in drawing. My grandmother is, I hope, well. Bristol's mercenary walls were never destined to hold me—there I was out of my element: now I am in it—LONDON! Good God!—how superior is London to that despicable place Bristol!"—*Works* (Ed. Cambridge, 1842), ii. 712–713.

¹ His old friend and rival, Kelly, who had been already for some months a hack-writer for the ministry, was now struggling hard to get a pension from Lord North; and an unpublished letter of his, written at this time, and acknowledging gratefully Garrick's warm assistance, lies before me. It overflows with praise; yet one reads it with an uneasy feeling that such services as it thanks Garrick for might better have been given by him to higher and worthier recipients. Certainly the letter is a strange contrast to all that have been preserved out of the correspondence of Garrick and Goldsmith. "Wednesday, 12th Sept., 1770. This day, and not before, I have got some certain intimation of Lord North's intention to do handsome things. Mr. Cooper told me of it in very obliging terms, adding that what I had done was very much approved, and that you were highly

of doing it. Not even to his *Natural History* did he turn without venting upon this sorrowful theme, in sentences that sounded strangely amid his talk of beasts and birds, what lay so near his heart. "The lower race of animals, when satisfied, for the instant moment are perfectly happy; but it is otherwise with man. His mind anticipates distress, and feels the pang of want even before it arrests him. Thus the mind being continually harassed by the situation, it at length influences the constitution, and unfits it for all its functions. Some cruel disorder, but no way like hunger, seizes the unhappy sufferer; so that almost all those men who have thus long lived by chance, and whose every day may be considered as an happy escape from famine, are known at last to die in reality of a disorder caused by hunger, but which, in the common language, is often called a broken heart. Some of these I have known myself, when very little able to relieve them; and I have been told by a very active and worthy magistrate that the number of such as die in London for want is much greater than one would imagine—I think he talked of two thousand in a year."¹ If this was already written, as from what he afterwards told Langton we may infer some portions of the *Animated Nature* to have been, Goldsmith little imagined the immortal name which was now to be added to the melancholy list. The writer of the sanguine letter I have quoted was doomed to be the next victim. He had not been in London many days, at the time when he so supposed he had mastered the booksellers; and in little less than three months after sending those hopeful tidings home, he yielded up his brain to the terrible disorder of which Goldsmith had seen so much: so unlike hunger, though hunger-bred. Gallantly had he worked in those three

my friend. The first part of the intelligence agreeably surprised me, the latter did not in the least; Garrick I have long known as another term for all the virtues, and instead of being amazed at his readiness to serve the unfriended, I should be actually amazed if his generosity had not found that readiness a very considerable satisfaction. Accept my best acknowledgments, my dear sir, for all your goodness to me."

¹ *Animated Nature*, ii. 6-7.

momentous months:¹ had projected histories of England and voluminous histories of London; had written for magazines, registers, and museums endless, the *London*, the *Town and Country*, the *Middlesex Freeholders'*, the *Court and City*; had composed a musical burlesque burletta; had launched into politics on both sides; had contributed sixteen songs for ten and sixpence; had received gladly two shillings for

¹ The language contains few things more affecting than the brief letters left by Chatterton, though as compositions they have no merit. I subjoin a few extracts. On the 26th of April, 1770, he writes to his "dear Mother": "Here I am, safe, and in high spirits. Got into London about five o'clock in the evening—called upon Mr. Edmunds, Mr. Fell, Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. Dodsley. Great encouragement from them; all approved of my design; shall soon be settled." On the 6th of May he writes to his "dear Mother" from Shoreditch the letter already quoted (vol. iii. 216), to which he adds, "I have some trifling presents for mother, sister," etc. On the 14th of May he writes: "I am invited to treat with a doctor of music, on the footing of a composer, for Ranelagh and the Gardens. Bravo, hey boys, up we go! Let my sister improve in copying music, and in drawing," etc. On the 30th of May he writes from "Tom's coffee-house" to his "dear Sister": "I will send you two silks this summer; and expect, in answer to this, what colors you prefer. My mother shall not be forgotten. My employment will be in writing a voluminous *History of London* . . . as this will not, like writing political essays, oblige me to go to the coffee-house, I shall be able to serve you the more by it." On the 19th of June he writes to his mother: "I send you in the box six cups and saucers with two basins for my sister. If a china tea-pot and cream-pot is in your opinion necessary, I will send them. . . . Two fans—the silver one is more grave than the other, which would suit my sister best. But that I leave to you both." He was now lodging at Mrs. Angel's the sack-maker, in Brook Street, Holborn. From that place, on the 20th of July, he again writes to his sister: "I am now about an oratorio, which, when finished, will purchase you a gown." On the 12th of August he writes to Mr. Catcott: "I intend going abroad as a surgeon. Mr. Barrett has it in his power to assist me greatly by his giving me a physical character. I hope he will. I trouble you with a copy of an essay I intend publishing." These were the last thoughts which connected him with life or its hopes, and they were precisely what had visited Goldsmith in an only less sore extremity. He wished to escape as a surgeon to the coast of Africa, and to help himself to go by means of an essay he had written. But it was not to be. Exactly twelve days after the date of this letter he was found dead in his wretched lodging. (For an amusing account of the way in which Catcott, here named, attended on Johnson and Boswell at their visit to Bristol, see *Boswell*, vi. 171-173.)

an article; had lived on a halfpenny roll, or a penny tart and a glass of water a day, enjoying now and then a sheep's tongue; had invented all the while brave letters about his happiness and success to the only creatures that loved him, his grandmother, mother, and sister, at Bristol; had even sent them, out of his so many daily pence, bits of china, fans, and a gown; and then, one fatal morning, after many bitter disappointments (one of them precisely what Goldsmith had himself undergone in as desperate distress, just as one of his expedients for escape, by "going abroad as a surgeon," had been also what Goldsmith tried), having passed some three days without food and refused his poor landlady's invitation to dinner, he was found dead in his miserable room, the floor thickly strewn with scraps of the manuscripts he had destroyed, a pocket-book memorandum lying near him to the effect that the booksellers owed him eleven pounds, and the cup which had held arsenic and water still grasped in his hand. It was in a wretched little street out of Holborn; the body was taken to the bone-house of St. Andrew's, but no one came to claim it; and in due time the pauper burial-ground of Shoe Lane received what remained of Chatterton. "The marvellous boy! The sleepless soul who perished in his pride!" He was not eighteen.

The tragedy had been all acted out before Goldsmith heard of any of the incidents. I am even glad to think that, during the whole of the month which preceded the catastrophe, he was absent from England.

CHAPTER VIII

A VISIT TO PARIS

1770

GOLDSMITH had quitted London on a visit to Paris in the middle of July. "The Professor of History," writes Mary Moser, the daughter of the keeper of the Academy, telling Fuseli at Rome how disappointed the literary people connected with the new institution had been not to receive diplomas of membership like the painters, "is comforted by the success of his *Deserted Village*, which is a very pretty poem, and has lately put himself under the conduct of Mrs. Horneck and her fair daughters, and is gone to France; and Dr. Johnson sips his tea and cares not for the vanity of the world."¹ Goldsmith himself, with most pleasant humor, has described in a letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds what happened to the party up to their lodgment in Calais, at the Hôtel d'Angleterre. They had not arrived many hours when he sent over this fragment of a despatch, to satisfy Reynolds merely of the safe arrival of Mrs. Horneck, the young ladies, and himself: "My dear Friend," he wrote, "We had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which we performed in three hours and twenty minutes, all of us extremely sea-sick, which must necessarily have happened, as my machine to prevent sea-sickness was not completed. We were glad to leave Dover, because we hated to be imposed upon; so were in high spirits at coming to Calais, where we were told that a little money would go a great way. Upon landing two little trunks, which was all we carried

¹ Knowles's *Life of Fuseli*, i. 36.

with us, we were surprised to see fourteen or fifteen fellows all running down to the ship to lay their hands upon them; four got under each trunk, the rest surrounded, and held the hasps; and in this manner our little baggage was conducted, with a kind of funeral solemnity, till it was safely lodged at the custom-house. We were well enough pleased with the people's civility till they came to be paid, when every creature that had the happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger expected sixpence; and had so pretty civil a manner of demanding it that there was no refusing them. When we had done with the porters, we had next to speak with the custom-house officers, who had their pretty civil way too. We were directed to the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where a *valet de place* came to offer his service, and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out that he was speaking English. We had no occasion for his service, so we gave him a little money because he spoke English, and because he wanted it. I cannot help mentioning another circumstance. I bought a new ribbon for my wig at Canterbury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain sixpence by buying me a new one."¹

This was not a very promising beginning; but the party, continuing to carry with them the national enjoyment of scolding everything they met with, passed on through Flanders, and to Paris by way of Lisle. The latter city was the scene of an incident afterwards absurdly misrelated. Standing at the window of their hotel to see a company of soldiers in the square, the beauty of the sisters Horneck drew such marked admiration that Goldsmith, heightening his drollery with that air of solemnity so generally a point in his humor and so often more solemnly misinterpreted, turned off from the window with the remark that elsewhere *he*, too, could have his admirers. The Jessamy Bride, Mrs. Gwyn, was asked about the occurrence not many years ago; remembered it as a playful jest; and said how shocked she

¹ This delightful fragment of a letter was first printed in the *Percy Memoir*, 90-91.

had subsequently been "to see it adduced in print as a proof of his envious disposition." The readers of Boswell will remember that it is so related by him. "When accompanying two beautiful young ladies with their mother on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him!"¹

At Lisle another letter to Reynolds was begun but laid aside, because everything they had seen was so dull that the description would not be worth reading. Nor had matters much improved when they got to Paris. Alas! Goldsmith had discovered a change in *himself* since he traversed those scenes with only his youth and his poverty for companions. Lying in a barn was no disaster then. Then, there were no postilions to quarrel with, no landladies to be cheated by, no silk coat to tempt him into making himself look like a fool. The world was his oyster in those days, which with his flute he opened. He expressed all this very plainly in a letter to Reynolds soon after their arrival, dated from Paris on the 29th of July. He is anxious to get back to what Gibbon, when he became a member of the club, called the relish of manly conversation and the society of the brown table. He is getting nervous about his arrears of work. He dares not think of another holiday yet, though Reynolds had proposed, on his return, a joint excursion into Devonshire. He is already planning new labor. He is even thinking of another comedy; and therefore glad that Colman's suit in chancery has ended in confirming his right as acting manager (the whole quarrel was made up the following year

¹ *Life of Johnson*, ii. 191. Northcote, with less excuse, has repeated it (*Life of Reynolds*, i. 250); but in later years he apologized for having too hastily done so, having since been better informed by Mrs. Gwyn. And see Moore's *Diary*, vi. 114-115. On the other hand, Mr. Croker, who had received from Mrs. Gwyn some notes for his *Boswell*, is careful to remind us that "the good-natured construction which the kind old lady was willing, after a lapse of above sixty years, to put on Goldsmith's behavior, she did not express in her previous communication with me, though it had afforded so obvious an opportunity of correcting the alleged injustice; and, after all, it can be only matter of opinion whether the vexation so seriously exhibited by Goldsmith was real or assumed."—140. See *post*, chap. xii.

by Mr. Harris's quarrel with Mrs. Lessingham). But here is the letter, as printed from the original in possession of Mr. Singer; and how pleasant are its little references to those weaknesses of his own which he well knew had never such kindly interpretation as from Reynolds, as where he whimsically protests that it never can be natural in himself to be stupid, where he reports himself saying as a good thing a thing which was not understood, and where he describes the silk coat he has purchased which makes him look like a fool!

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I began a long letter to you from Lisle giving a description of all that we had done and seen, but finding it very dull, and knowing that you would show it again, I threw it aside and it was lost. You see by the top of this letter that we are at Paris, and (as I have often heard you say) we have brought our own amusement with us, for the ladies do not seem to be very fond of what we have yet seen.

"With regard to myself I find that travelling at twenty and at forty are very different things. I set out with all my confirmed habits about me, and can find nothing on the Continent so good as when I formerly left it. One of our chief amusements here is scolding at everything we meet with, and praising everything and every person we left at home.¹ You may judge, therefore, whether your name is not frequently bandied at table among us. To tell you the truth, I never thought I could regret your absence so much as our various mortifications on the road have often taught me to do. I could tell you of disasters and adventures without number, of our lying in barns, and of my being half-poisoned with a dish of green peas, of our quarrelling with postilions and being cheated by our landladies; but I reserve all this for an happy hour which I expect to share with you upon my return.

"I have little to tell you more but that we are at present all well, and expect returning when we have stayed out one month, which I should not care if it were over this very day. I long to hear from you all: how you yourself do, how Johnson, Burke, Dyer, Chamier, Colman, and every one of the club do. I wish I could send you some amusement in this letter, but I protest I am so stupefied by the air of this country (for I am sure it can never be natural) that I have not a word to say. I have been thinking of the plot of a comedy, which shall be entitled 'A Journey to Paris,' in which a family shall be introduced with a full intention of going to

¹ The same opinion, more forcibly, he expressed later at Ridge's table (the "Anchovy" of *Retaliation*), when, being asked if he would recommend travel, he said yes, he would by all means recommend it, to the rich if they were without the sense of smelling, and to the poor if they were without the sense of feeling.

France to save money. You know there is not a place in the world more promising for that purpose. As for the meat of this country, I can scarce eat it, and though we pay two good shillings an head for our dinner, I find it all so tough that I have spent less time with my knife than my pick-tooth. I said this as a good thing at table, but it was not understood. I believe it to be a good thing.

"As for our intended journey to Devonshire, I find it out of my power to perform it, for, as soon as I arrive at Dover I intend to let the ladies go on, and I will take a country lodging somewhere near that place in order to do some business. I have so outrun the constable that I must mortify a little to bring it up again. For God's sake the night you receive this take your pen in your hand and tell me something about yourself, and *myself*, if you know of anything that has happened. About Miss Reynolds, about Mr. Bickerstaff, my nephew, or anybody that you regard. I beg you will send to Griffin, the bookseller, to know if there be any letters left for me, and be so good as to send them to me at Paris. They may, perhaps, be left for me at the porter's lodge opposite the pump in Temple Lane. The same messenger will do. I expect one from Lord Clare from Ireland. As for others, I am not much uneasy about [them].¹

"Is there anything I can do for you at Paris? I wish you would tell me. The whole of my own purchases here is one silk coat, which I have put on, and which makes me look like a fool. But no more of that. I find that Colman has gained his lawsuit. I am glad of it. I suppose you often meet. I will soon be among you, better pleased with my situation at home than I ever was before. And yet I must say that if anything could make France pleasant, the very good women with whom I am at present would certainly do it. I could say more about that, but I intend showing them this letter before I send it away. What signifies teasing you longer with moral observations when the business of my writing is over. I have one thing only more to say, and of that I think every hour in the day, namely, that I am your

"Most sincere and most affectionate friend,

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

"Direct to me at the Hôtel de Danemarck,

"Rue Jacob, Fauxbourg St. Germain."

Little more is to be added of this excursion. It was not made more agreeable to Goldsmith by an unexpected addition to the party in the person of Mr. Hickey (the "special attorney" who is niched into *Retaliation*),² who joined them

¹ Yet from one of them he was to learn his mother's death.

² "He cherish'd his friend, and he relish'd a bumper;
Yet one fault he had, and that one was a thumper. . . .
Then what was his failing? come, tell it, and burn ye—
He was, could he help it? a special attorney."

The profession in those days failed to enjoy the esteem which its worthier
XI—15

at Paris, and whose habit of somewhat coarse raillery was apt to be indulged too freely at Goldsmith's expense. One of the stories Hickey told on his return, however, seems to have been true enough. Goldsmith sturdily maintained that a certain distance from one of the fountains at Versailles was within reach of a leap, and tumbled into the water in his attempt to establish that position. He also made his friends smile by protesting that all the French parrots he had heard spoke such capital French that he understood them perfectly, whereas an English parrot, talking his own native Irish, was quite unintelligible to him.¹ It was also told of him, in proof of his oddity, that on Mrs. Horneck desiring him more than once, when they had no place of Protestant worship to attend, to read them the morning service, his uniform answer was, "I should be happy to oblige you, my dear madam, but in truth I do not think myself good enough." This, however, we may presume to think perhaps less eccentric than his friends supposed it to be.

Goldsmith did not stay in Dover as he had proposed. He brought the ladies to London. Among the letters forwarded to him in Paris had been an announcement of his mother's death. Dead to any consciousness or enjoyment of life she had for some time been; blind, and otherwise infirm; and hardly could the event have been unexpected by him, or

members have since attracted to it. "Much inquiry having been made concerning a gentleman who had quitted a company where Johnson was, and no information being obtained, at last Johnson observed that he did not care to speak ill of any man behind his back, but he believed the gentleman was an attorney."—Maxwell's collectanea, in *Boswell*, iii. 141. Mrs. Piozzi relates the same incident (*Anecdotes*, 272), and adds that though Johnson did not encourage general satire, he was not at all displeased to be reminded of this instance of indulgence in it.

¹ For grave reasoning in support of this proposition, see *Animated Nature*, iv. 217. "I was at first for ascribing it to the different qualities of the two languages, and was for entering into an elaborate discussion on the vowels and consonants; but a friend that was with me solved the difficulty at once by assuring me that the French women scarcely did anything else the whole day than sit and instruct their feathered pupils; and that the birds were thus distinct in their lessons in consequence of continual schooling."

by any one. Yet are there few, however early tumbled out upon the world, to whom the world has been able to give any substitute for that earliest friend. Not less true than affecting is the saying in one of Gray's letters: "I have discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one never can have any more than a single mother."¹ The story (which Northcote tells) that would attribute to Goldsmith the silly slight of appearing in half-mourning at this time, and explaining it as for a "distant" relation, would not be credible of any man of common sensibility; far less of him.² Mr. William Filby's bills enable us to speak with greater accuracy. As in the instance of his

¹ It touches a deeper sentiment than the same thought in *Herodotus*, which prompts the choice of the brother before even husband or children, the parents being dead. Ω βασιλεῦ, ἀνὴρ μὲν μοι ἂν ἄλλος γένοιτο, εἰ δαίμων ἐθέλοι, καὶ τέκνα ἄλλα, εἰ ταῦτα ἀποβάλοιμι· πατὴρ δὲ καὶ μητὴρ οὐκ ἔτι μεῦ ζώντων, ἀδελφεὸς ἂν ἄλλος οὐδενὶ τρόπῳ γένοιτο· ταύτῃ τῇ γνώμῃ χρεωμένη, ἔλεξα ταῦτα.—*Herodoti Thalia*, cxix. (Ed. Schweighæuser, i. 261.) So, too, our First Edward, when he grieved less for his son's than for his father's death.—*Hume*, chap. xiii. Lord Lyttelton writes to me upon this: "There is a passage in Sophocles which I have long known by heart, evidently copied from this of Herodotus. It is odd that though I read Herodotus through not long ago, I do not remember observing this resemblance till now. They are fine lines, and may be worth referring to in a future edition." The lines are 900-904 of *Antigone*: Ed. Hermann. 1825: where Antigone says that there might be another husband for her if the first died, and, if her child were lost, another from another man: but, her father and her mother being laid in the grave, it was impossible that a brother should ever be born to her.

πόσις μὲν ἂν μοι, καθανόντος, ἄλλος ἦν,
καὶ παῖς ἀπ' ἄλλου φωτός, εἰ τοῦδ' ἤμπλακον·
μητὴρ δ' ἐν "Αἰδον καὶ πατὴρ κεκευθότιν,
οὐκ ἔστ' ἀδελφὸς ὅστις ἂν βλάστοι ποτὶ.

² "About the year 1770, Dr. Goldsmith lost his mother, who died in Ireland. On this occasion he immediately dressed himself in a suit of clothes of gray cloth, trimmed with black, such as commonly is worn for second mourning. When he appeared the first time after this at Sir Joshua Reynolds's house, Miss F. Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua, asked him whom he had lost, as she saw he wore mourning, when he answered, a distant relation only; being shy, as I conjecture, to own that he wore such slight mourning for so near a relative."—*Northcote's Life of Reynolds*, i. 212.

brother's death, they contain an entry of a "suit of mourning," sent home on the 8th of September.¹

But indulgence of sorrow is one of the luxuries of the idle; and whatever the loss or grief that might afflict him, the work that waited Goldsmith must be done.

¹ See vol. iii. 16, 168.

CHAPTER IX

THE HAUNCH OF VENISON AND GAME OF CHESS

1770-1771

EIGHT days after he put on mourning for his mother's death, on the 16th of September, 1770, Goldsmith was signing a fresh agreement with Davies for an *Abridgment* of his Roman History in a duodecimo volume; for making which, "and for putting his name thereto," Davies undertook to pay fifty guineas.¹ The same worthy bibliopole had published in the summer his *Life of Parnell*, to which I formerly referred. It was lightly and pleasantly written; had some really good remarks on the defects as well as merits of Parnell's translations; and contained that pretty illustration (whereof all who have written biography know the truth as well as beauty), of the difficulty of obtaining, when fame has set its seal on any celebrated man, those personal details of his obscurer days which his contemporaries have not cared to give: "The dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendor." It also contained remarks on the ornamental schools of poetry, in which allusions, not in the best taste, were levelled against Gray, and less specifically against his old favorite Collins; yet remarks, I must add, of which the principle was sound enough, though pushed—as good principles are apt to be—to an absurd extreme. For, of styles all bristling with epithets, Voltaire himself was not less tolerant than Goldsmith; nor ever with greater zest denounced the adjective as the substantive's greatest en-

¹ *Percy Memoir*, 79, note.

emy.¹ But merits as well as faults in the Parnell memoir Tom Davies, of course, tested by the sale; and with result so satisfactory² that another memoir had at once been en-

¹ I fear there is no reasonable ground for doubting that Goldsmith was guilty of the egregious bad taste, which Cradock has recorded, of proposing to improve Gray's *Elegy* by cutting the imagination boldly out of it. "You are so attached," he represents Goldsmith saying, "to Hurd, Gray, and Mason that you think nothing good can proceed but out of that formal school; now, I'll mend Gray's *Elegy*, by leaving out an idle word in every line!" "And for me, Doctor, completely spoil it."

"The curfew tolls the knell of day,
The lowing herd winds o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his way,
And—"

"Enough, enough, I have no ear for more."—Cradock's *Memoirs*, i. 230. This was certainly carrying out to its most alarming practical extent Voltaire's objection to epithets. "If certain authors could only understand," exclaimed the great Frenchman, "that adjectives are the greatest enemies of substantives, although they agree in gender, number, and case!" A subtle critic in the *Edinburgh Review* (lxxxviii. 205: Lord Lytton has since avowed himself the writer) has, on the other hand, pointed out that the epithet is often, and in no poet more than Gray, precisely that word in a verse which addresses itself most to the imagination of the reader, and tests most severely that of the author. A good epithet is always an image, which the critic proceeds to illustrate by a line, which, as Shakespeare wrote it, would stand

The gaudy, babbling, and remorseless day;

until a process such as that which Goldsmith applies to the later poet should amend it into the faultless simplicity of

The day!

I am afraid that some meddler had been putting Goldsmith out of humor with the poet of Pembroke Hall by telling him how meanly Parnell himself was thought of there. He had a sort of family as well as national liking for Parnell, and would be sadly disposed to resent, with even greater injustice in the other extreme, Gray's characterization of him as "the dunghill of Irish Grub Street." See *Correspondence of Gray and Mason*, 153.

² Nor should I omit to add that other satisfactory result to his own fame which arose from the famous eulogy of Johnson. "The Life of Dr. Parnell is a task which I should very willingly decline, since it has been lately written by Goldsmith, a man of such variety of powers and such felicity of performance that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness,

gaged for, and now occupied Goldsmith on his return. Bolingbroke was the subject selected, for its hot party interest, of course; indeed, the life was to be prefixed to a republication of the *Dissertation on Parties*; but it was not the writer's mode, whatever the bookseller may have wished, to turn a literary memoir into a political pamphlet; and what was written proved very harmless that way, with as little in it to concern Lord North as Mr. Wilkes, and of as small interest, it would seem, to the writer as to either. "Dr. Goldsmith is gone with Lord Clare into the country," writes Davies to Granger, "and I am plagued to get the proofs from him of his *Life of Lord Bolingbroke*."¹ However, he did get them; and the book was published in December. It must be admitted, I fear, that it is but a slovenly piece of writing. The two closing paragraphs, summing up Bolingbroke's character, alone have any pretension to strength or merit of style; and these were so marked an imitation of that Johnsonian manner in which Goldsmith's writing for the most part is singularly deficient, whatever his conversation at times may have been, that the resemblance did not escape his friends of the *Monthly Review*. They closed their bitter onslaught² on the Bolingbroke biography by broadly,

and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness. What such an author has told, who would tell again? I have made an abstract from his larger narrative; and have this gratification from my attempt, that it gives me an opportunity of paying due tribute to the memory of Goldsmith.

‘Τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανάτῳ.’”

—*Lives of the Poets*. (*Works*, iii. 522.) On the other hand, he remarked to Boswell, on its first appearance: "Goldsmith's *Life of Parnell* is poor; not that it is poorly written, but that he had poor materials; for nobody can write the life of a man but those who have eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him."—*Life*, iii. 197-198.

¹ Granger's *Letters*, 48.

² *Monthly Review*, February, 1771, xliv. 108. The amiable Griffiths begins his attack by candidly confessing his gratification at the opportunity afforded him by Goldsmith's book "of indulging a desire we have long had at heart of exposing that false, futile, and slovenly style, which, to the utter neglect of grammatical precision and purity, disgraces, etc., and no author ever gave a fairer opportunity of discharging it than the author of this *Life*."

and of course without any other foundation for the slander, insinuating the authorship of Johnson in these particular passages; "being as much superior to the rest of the composition as the style and manner of Johnson are to those of his equally pompous but feeble imitator." It ought, perhaps, to be added that it was the very rare occasional indulgence in imitative sentences of this kind, and in conversation rather than in books (for its occurrence in the latter is so rare as, except in this single instance, to be hardly discoverable), that doubtless so often caused Goldsmith to be foolishly talked about as belonging to the "Johnsonian school," with which he had absolutely nothing in common.

The charge of using Johnson's hard words in conversa-

of Bolingbroke." To show the delicacy of personal reference with which the so grateful office was discharged, I shall quote, with its comment, one out of the eighteen examples of "false language" laughed at by the critical and tasteful Griffiths. "10. 'Bolingbroke and his wife parted by mutual consent, *both* equally displeased?' *Arrah!*" The reader will, perhaps, thank me for closing this note with a specimen of the imitation of Johnson to which I advert in the text: "In this manner lived and died Lord Bolingbroke, ever active, never depressed, ever pursuing fortune, and as constantly disappointed by her. In whatever light we view his character, we shall find him an object rather properer for our wonder than our imitation, more to be feared than esteemed, and gaining our admiration without our love. His ambition ever aimed at the summit of power, and nothing seemed capable of satisfying his immoderate desires but the liberty of governing all things without a rival. With as much ambition, as great abilities, and more acquired knowledge than Cæsar, he wanted only his courage to be as successful: but the schemes his head dictated his heart often refused to execute; and he lost the ability to perform just when the great occasion called for all his efforts to engage."—*Miscellaneous Works*, iii. 424. Passages of this kind formed an attractive theme for satire to the small wits of the day. *Exempli gratiâ*, thus writes and annotates the satirical author of the *Patron*:

"Goldsmith thus robed assumes a mock command,
And in those regions reigns Johnson at second-hand.

The puny Doctor tore from the brawny shoulders of Johnson a corner of his mantle, in which he swath'd himself o'er and o'er." I will close this note by referring to a delightful letter from Burke to Murphy on the dangers attending such a style as Johnson's, to be found in Richard Sharp's *Letters and Essays*, 17.

tion, I may here also remark, already brought against him by Joseph Warton, is much harped upon by Hawkins. "He affected," says that ill-natured gentleman, "Johnson's style and manner of conversation, and when he had uttered, as he often would, a labored sentence, so tumid as to be scarcely intelligible, would ask if that was not truly Johnsonian."¹ Nor has Boswell omitted it: "To me and many others it appeared that he studiously copied the manner of Johnson, though, indeed, upon a smaller scale." It is, however, to be observed that the same thing is found said so often, and of so many other people, as for the most part to lose its distinctive or pertinent character. Of Boswell himself it is undoubtedly far more certain than of Goldsmith that he was ludicrous for this kind of imitation of Johnson.

Walpole laughs at him for it; Madame d'Arblay highly colors its most comical incidents; and above all we see it in the conversations of his own wonderful book; so that when he proceeds to turn the laugh on Johnson's landlord, little Allen, the printer, of Bolt Court, for "imitating the stately periods and slow and solemn utterance of the great man," and on another occasion professes himself "not a little amused by observing Allen perpetually struggling to talk in the manner of Johnson, like the little frog in the fable blowing himself up to resemble the stately ox," the effect is amazingly absurd. On the whole, though it is by no means unlikely, as has just been said, that Goldsmith, as well as others who looked up to Johnson, may have fallen now and then into unconscious Johnsonianisms, the charge in its deliberate and exaggerated form must rather be regarded as a sort of falling in with a fashionable cant, in vogue more or less against all with whom Johnson was familiar. It is at least indisputable that no trace of the absurd imitation alleged is discoverable, as a habit, in Boswell's reports of Goldsmith's conversations, where, if it existed at all, that reporter must surely have revealed it who was too truthful

¹ *Life of Johnson*, 416. The subsequent *Boswell* references are ii. 189, vii. 106, viii. 68-69.

to suppress his own, and where, indeed, one might fairly expect to have found it even somewhat caricatured.

Goldsmith continued with Lord Clare during the opening months of 1771.¹ They were together at Gosfield and at Bath; and it was in the latter city the amusing incident occurred which Bishop Percy has related, as told him by the Duchess of Northumberland. The Duke and Duchess occupied a house on one of the parades next door to Lord Clare's, and were surprised one day, when about to sit down to breakfast, to see Goldsmith enter the breakfast-room as from the street, and, without notice of them or the conversation they continued, fling himself unconcernedly, "in a manner the most free and easy," on a sofa. After a few minutes, "as he was then perfectly known to them both, they inquired of him the Bath news of the day; and imagining there was some mistake, endeavored by easy and cheerful conversation to prevent his being too much embarrassed, till, breakfast being served up, they invited him to stay and partake of it"; but upon this, the invitation calling him back from the dream-land he had been visiting, he declared with profuse apologies that he had thought he was in his friend Lord Clare's house, and in irrecoverable confusion hastily withdrew. "But not," adds the Bishop, "till they had kindly made him promise to dine with them."

Of Lord Clare's friendly familiarity with the poet this incident gives us proof; he had himself no very polished manners, being the *Squire Gawkey* of the libels of his time, and might the better tolerate Goldsmith's; but that their intercourse just at present was as frequent as familiar seems to have been because, at this date, Lord Clare had most need of a friend. "I am told," says a letter-writer of the day, "that Dr. Goldsmith now generally lives with his countryman Lord Clare, *who has lost his only son, Colo-*

¹ "I was last night at the club. Dr. Percy has written a long ballad in many *fits*; it is pretty enough. He has printed and will soon publish it. Goldsmith is at Bath, with Lord Clare. At Mr. Thrall's, where I am now writing, all are well."—Johnson to Boswell, March 20, 1771. *Boswell*, iii. 153.

² *Percy Memoir*, 69.

nel Nugent." There was left to him, however, an only daughter, the handsome girl whom Reynolds painted, who was married, in the year after Goldsmith's death, to the first Marquis of Buckingham; and with whom, she being as yet in her childhood, and he (as she loved long afterwards to say, and her son, Lord Nugent, often repeated to me) being never out of his, Goldsmith became companion and playfellow. He taught her games, she played him tricks, and, to the last hour of her long life, "dearly loved his memory." Yet even in this friendly house he was not without occasional mortifications, such as his host could not protect him from; and one of them was related by himself. In his "diverting simplicity," says Boswell, speaking with his own much more diverting air of patronage, Goldsmith complained one day, in a mixed company, of Lord Camden. "I met him," he said, "at Lord Clare's house in the country; and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." At this, according to Boswell, himself and the company laughed heartily, whereupon Johnson stood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay, gentlemen, Dr. Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him."¹

¹ *Boswell*, vii. 160. And see Lord Campbell's *Chancellors*, v. 353. Lord Campbell seems to infer that it was from a dislike to Goldsmith and the set that Lord Camden was "not a member of the literary club," which, the noble biographer tells us, he should have been glad to record that he was; but Lord Campbell does not seem to be aware that Camden was proposed at the club and blackballed. See vol. ii. 102. And to what extent such noblemen as the Whig or Tory chancellors made up for their neglect of a Goldsmith by their attentions to a Johnson, Mr. Croker gives us some means of judging in a characteristic note to his first edition of *Boswell*. "His polite acquaintance did not extend much beyond the circle of Mr. Thrale, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the members of the club. There is no record that I recollect of his having dined at the table of any peer in London (Lord Lucan, an Irish peer, is hardly an exception). He seems scarcely to have known an English bishop, except Dr. Shipley, whom every one knew, and Bishop Porteus; and, except by a few occasional visits at the *bas-bleu* assemblies of Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey, we do not trace him in anything like fashionable society. This seems strange to us; for happily, in our day, a literary man of much less than Johnson's eminence

It was doubtless much for Lord Clare that *he* did not. By that simple means he would seem to have lessened many griefs and added to many an enjoyment. Attentions are cheaply rendered that win such sympathy as a true heart returns; and if, from what Wraxall describes as the then spacious avenues of Gosfield Park, Lord Clare had sent an entire buck every season to his friend's humble chambers in the Temple, the single *Haunch of Venison* which Goldsmith sent back would richly have repaid him. The charming verses which bear that name were written this year, and appear to have been written for Lord Clare alone; nor was it until two years after their writer's death that they obtained a wider audience than his immediate circle of friends. Yet, written with no higher aim than of private pleasantry, a more delightful piece of humor, or a more finished bit of style, has probably been seldom written. There is not a word to spare, every word is in its right place, the most

would be courted into the highest and most brilliant ranks. Lord Wellesley recollects, with regret, the little notice, compared with his posthumous reputation, which the fashionable world seemed to take of Johnson." In his last edition (p. 501) Mr. Croker omits the second sentence of this note; and in the third, omitting the sneer at Bishop Shipley, adds Mrs. Ord's name to those of Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Vesey. But I believe the original note to be substantially correct, and so I leave it. Very honorable to him, let me add, is the invariable tone employed by Lord Campbell in commenting upon traits of this kind. "With all his titles and all his wealth," he exclaims of Lord Hardwicke (*Chancellors*, v. 167), "how poor is his fame in comparison of that of his contemporary, Samuel Johnson, whom he would not have received at his Sunday evening parties in Powis House, or invited to hear his stale stories at Wimpole! A man desirous of solid fame would rather have written the *Rambler*, the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, *Rasselas*, or the *Lives of the Poets*, than have delivered all Lord Hardwicke's speeches in Parliament and all his judgments in the Court of Chancery, although the author had been sometimes obliged to pass the night on the ashes of a glass-house, and at last thought himself passing rich with his £300 pension, while the Peer lived in splendor, and died worth a million. . . . Hardwicke is to Johnson, as the most interesting life that could be written of Hardwicke is to Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, the proportion of a farthing candle to the meridian sun." For a hint as to the causes of the general dislike of great people for Johnson, see vol. iii. 183 (*note*); and we must always remember Johnson's own remark to Boswell: "Sir, great lords and great ladies don't love to have their mouths stopped."

boisterous animal spirits are controlled by the most charming good taste, and an indescribable airy elegance pervades and encircles all. Its very incidents seem of right to claim a place here, so naturally do they fall within the drama of Goldsmith's life.

Allusions in the lines fix their date to the early months of 1771; and it was probably on his return from the visit to which reference has just been made that Lord Clare's side of venison had reached him. (On the whole, I may take occasion to remark, I prefer the text of the first edition, though the second had ten additional lines, and is likely, as alleged, to have been printed from Goldsmith's corrected copy.)

"Thanks, my Lord, for your Venison, for finer or fatter
Never rang'd in a forest, or smok'd in a platter;
The Haunch was a picture for Painters to study,
The white was so white, and the red was so ruddy;¹
Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting,
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating;
I had thoughts, in my Chambers to place it in view,
To be shown to my Friends as a piece of *Virtu*;
As in some *Irish* houses, where things are so-so,
One Gammon of Bacon hangs up for a show;
But, for eating a Rasher of what they take pride in,
They'd as soon think of eating the Pan it is fried in."

But these witty fancies yield to more practical views as he contemplates the delicate luxury; and he bethinks him of the appetites most likely to do it justice.

"To go on with my Tale—as I gaz'd on the Haunch,
I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch;
So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undrest,
To paint it, or eat it, just as he lik'd best.
Of the Neck and the Breast I had next to dispose;
'Twas a neck and a Breast that might rival M—r—se:
But in parting with these I was puzzled again,
With the how, and the who, and the where, and the when:
There's H—d, and C—y, and H—rth, and H—ff,
I think they love Venison—I know they love Beef."

¹ The second edition has:

"The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy."

Ah! he had excellent reason to know it. These were four of his poor-poet pensioners, three of whom, in the first uncorrected copy of the poem, stood undisguisedly as "*Coley*, and *Williams*, and *Howard*, and *Hiff*"; but though it is said that for Howard he meant to substitute a surgeon named Hogarth,¹ then living in Leicester Square, Hiffenan is alone recognizable now. M—r—se was Lord Townshend's *Dorothy Monroe*, to whose charms he devoted his verse.

"There's my countryman H—gg—ns—Oh! let him alone
For making a Blunder or picking a Bone.
But hang it—to Poets who seldom can eat,
Your very good Mutton's a very good Treat;
Such Dainties to them! It would look like a flirt,
Like sending 'em Ruffles when wanting a Shirt.²
While thus I debated, in Reverie centred,
An Acquaintance, a Friend as he call'd himself, enter'd;
An underbred, fine-spoken Fellow was he,
And he smil'd, as he looked at the Venison and me."

This is the hero of the poem; and sketched so vividly, with a humor so life-like and droll, that he was probably a veritable person. In the first published copy indeed, which, as I have said, contains many touches preferable to those that replace them in the second version, he is described as

"A fine spoken Custom-house officer he,
Who smil'd as he gaz'd on the Venison and me."

In what follows the leading notion is founded on one of Boileau's satires,³ but the comedy is both more rich and

¹ But this is doubtful. It has also been conjectured that by C—y (*Coley*), George Colman was intended: a quite incredible supposition.

² I here again, in my text, interpose the reading of the first edition as preferable to this of the second:

"Such Dainties to them their Health it might hurt,
It's like sending them Ruffles when wanting a Shirt."

³ The third satire of Boileau, which, on the other hand, owed not a little, as did also Regnier's tenth satire, to Horace and his raillery of the banquet of Nasidienus. But Mr. Croker has well pointed out how infinitely more droll, natural, and original are the company here brought together; and how nicely the details of the dinner, overdone and tedious in Boileau, are touched by Goldsmith with a pleasantry not carried too far.

Boileau

more delicate. The visitor ascertains that the venison is really Goldsmith's.

"If that be the case then, cried he, very gay,
I'm glad I have taken this House in my Way.
To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me;
No Words—I insist on't—precisely at three:
We'll have Johnson, and Burke, all the Wits will be there,
My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my Lord Clare.¹
And, now that I think on't, as I am a sinner!
We wanted this Venison to make out the Dinner.
What say you—a pasty—it shall, and it must,²
And my Wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.
Here, Porter!—this Venison with me to Mile End;
No stirring—I beg—my dear friend—my dear friend!³
Thus snatching his hat, he brusht off like the wind,
And the porter and eatables follow'd behind.

Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,
And nobody with me at sea but myself,
Though I could not help thinking my gentleman hasty,
Yet Johnson, and Burke, and a good venison pasty,
Were things that I never dislik'd in my life,
Though clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his Wife.
So next Day in due splendor to make my approach,
I drove to his door in my own Hackney coach."

Sad is the disappointment. He *had* better have remained, as the Duke of Cumberland had said to Lady Grosvenor in those love-letters with which the newspapers were now making mirth for the town, with "nobody with him at sea but himself." Johnson and Burke can't come. The one is at Thrale's and the other at the horrible House of Commons. But never mind, says the host; you shall see some-

¹ The original of this couplet is in Boileau :

"Molière avec Tartuf y doit jouer son rôle,
Et Lambert, qui plus est, m'a donné sa parole."

Yet the right to copy might be safely given to everybody if accompanied by the condition that it should be as natural a copy as this. Who would believe it imitated ?

² The first edition had

"I'll take no denial—you shall and you must."

³ This line stood in the first edition :

"No words, my dear Goldsmith! my very good friend!"

thing quite as good. And here Goldsmith remembered his former visitor, Parson Scott, who had just now got his fat Northumberland livings in return for his "Anti-Sejanus" letters, and, in hope of a bishopric very probably,¹ was redoubling his anti-Whig efforts through the same channel of the *Public Advertiser* under the signatures of "Panurge" and "Cinna." "There is a villain who writes under the signature of 'Panurge,'" exclaimed the impetuous Barré, from his seat on the 12th of March, "a noted ministerial scribbler undoubtedly supported by government. He has this day published the grossest abuse upon the Duke of Portland, charging him with robbing Sir James Lowther; yet this dirty scoundrel is suffered to go unpunished."² Not wholly; for Goldsmith, to whom Burke had probably talked of the matter at the club, now ran his polished rapier through the political parson. Never mind for Burke and Johnson, repeats his host; I've provided capital substitutes.

"For I knew it, he cried, both eternally fail,
The one with his speeches, and t'other with Thrale;
But no matter, I'll warrant we'll make up the party,
With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty.
The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew,
They're both of them merry, and authors like you.³
The one writes the *Snarler*, the other the *Scourge*;
Some think he writes *Cinna*—he owns to *Panurge*."

The only hope left is the pasty; though it looks somewhat alarming when dinner is served and no pasty appears. There is fried liver and bacon at the top, tripe at the bot-

¹ "I congratulate the ministry and the University," writes Nichols to Gray a month or two before the poet's death (29th April, 1771), "on the honor they have both acquired by the promotion of Mr. Scott; may there never be wanting such lights of the Church! and such ornaments of that famous seminary of virtue and good learning!" During the contest of Lords Sandwich and Hardwicke for the Cambridge High-Stewardship, when Scott was busy, as usual, in libelling for his profligate patron, Gray had described this infamous party hack as hired to do all in his power to provoke people by personal abuse, yet "cannot so much as get himself answered."—*Works*, iv. 34, v. 135.

² *Cavendish Debates*, ii. 390.

³ Or, as the first edition had it, "Who dabble and write in the papers like you."

tom ; there is spinach at the sides, with "pudding made hot"; and in the middle a place where the pasty "was—not." Now Goldsmith can't eat bacon or tripe; and even more odious to him than either is the ravenous literary Scot, and the talk of the chocolate-cheeked scribe of a Jew (who likes "these here dinners *so pretty and small*"); but still there's the pasty promised, with Kitty's famous crust; and of this a rumor goes gradually round the table, till the Scot, though already replete with tripe and bacon, announces "a corner for thot"; and "we'll all keep a corner" is the general resolve, and on the pasty everything is concentrated; when the terrified maid brings in, not the pasty, but the catastrophe, in the shape of terrible news from the baker. To him had the pasty been carried, crust and all:

"And so it fell out, for that negligent sloven
Had shut out the Pasty on shutting his oven."

Having thus described the first important manifestation of that power of easy, witty, sarcastic verse which, even as life was closing on Goldsmith, began to be a formidable weapon in his hands, here may also be fitting occasion to connect with the *Haunch of Venison* a poem of which the date and circumstances attending its composition are unknown; which has never been publicly ascribed to him until now, and would seem, for some unaccountable reason, to have failed to find its way into print; yet which I cannot hesitate to call his, not simply because the manuscript is undoubtedly his handwriting, but for the better reason that what it contains is really not unworthy of him. In the absence of certain information I shall forbear to speculate on the probable circumstances which led to the selection of such a subject as an exercise in verse, and content myself with presenting a brief outline of Vida's *Game of Chess*¹ in

¹ Of the *Game of Chess*, Lowndes gives a list of seven versions in English: by James Rowbotham, 1562; George Jeffreys, 1736; W. Erskine, 1736; Samuel Pullin (Dublin), 1750; Anon. (Eton), 1769; Anon. (Oxford), 1778; and Murphy, 1786. The latter is to be found in his *Works*, vii. 67. But though the date of Murphy's translation is given by Lowndes as 1786

the English heroic metre, as it has been found transcribed in the writing of Oliver Goldsmith by my friend Mr. Bolton Corney, whose property it is, and who kindly permits my use of it.

It is a small quarto manuscript of thirty-four pages, containing six hundred and seventy-nine lines, to which a fly-leaf is appended in which Goldsmith notes the differences of nomenclature between Vida's chessmen and our own. It has occasional interlineations and corrections, but such as would occur in transcription rather than in a first or original copy. Sometimes, indeed, choice appears to have been made (as at page 29) between two words equally suitable to the sense and verse, as "to" for "toward"; but the insertions and erasures refer almost wholly to words or lines accidentally omitted and replaced. The triplet is always carefully marked; and seldom as it is found in any other of Goldsmith's poems, I am disposed to regard its frequent recurrence here as even helping, in some degree, to explain the motive which had led him to the trial of an experiment in rhyme comparatively new to him. If we suppose him, half consciously it may be, taking up the manner of the great master of translation, Dryden, who was at all times so much a favorite with him, he would at least, in so marked a peculiarity, be less apt to fall short than to err, perhaps, a little on the side of excess. Though I am far from thinking such to be the result in the present instance. The effect of the whole translation is pleasing to me, and the mock-heroic effect I think not a little assisted by the reiterated use of the triplet and alexandrine. As to any evidences of authorship derivable from the appearance of the manuscript, I will only add another word. The lines in the translation

(when for the first time it was printed), it was in reality a production of his youth. I quote the preface to it. "For translating so ingenious a piece, the present writer, after saying that it is the production of his earliest years, will make no apology." See Foot's *Life*, 323-324. Whether the fact of the existence of this translation by Murphy became known to Goldsmith, and led to the suppression of his own, can only now be matter of conjecture.

have been carefully counted, and the number is marked in Goldsmith's hand at the close of his transcription. Such a fact is, of course, only to be taken in aid of other proof; but a man is not generally at the pains of counting—still less, I should say in such a case as Goldsmith's, of elaborately transcribing—lines which are not his own.

Of Vida himself there is little occasion to speak. What student of literature does not know the gay, courtly, scholarly priest, the favorite of Leo the Magnificent, whom the Seventh Clement invested with the mitre of Alba, and who was crowned with a laurel as unfading as his wit by that great English poet in whose fancy even the ancient glories of Italy seemed to linger still, while

"A Raffaele painted and a Vida sung.
Immortal Vida! on whose honored brow
The poet's bays and critic's ivy grow:
Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame."¹

Yet when those lines appeared, in the most marvellous youthful poem of our language, Pope's greatest debt to Vida was still to be incurred. The game of chess enriched the *Rape of the Lock*² with the delightful game at ombre. Nor would it be possible better to express, to a reader unacquainted with the original, that charm in Vida's poem which appears to have amused and attracted Goldsmith's imagination, than by referring to the close exactness in the movements of the game between the Baron and Belinda, on which Pope has lavished such exquisite fancy and wit so delicate and masterly. With all this, Vida has combined

¹ *Essay on Criticism*, l. 705-708. Written before Pope was twenty.—Spence, 41 and 45.

² Though the first sketch of this delightful poem (characterized by Goldsmith in his *Beauties of English Poetry* as "Pope's most finished production, and perhaps the most perfect in our language") appeared in Lintot's *Miscellany* within a year after the publication of the *Essay on Criticism*, it did not receive its highest touches till the appearance of the second edition, which contained the machinery of the sylphs and the game at ombre. See *Works*, iii. 169.

in a yet greater degree the subtle play of satire implied in the elevation of his theme to the epic rank. The machinery employed, the similes used, are those in which the epic poets claim a peculiar property. Yet, at the same time, so closely are the most intricate and masterly moves of chess expressed in the various fortunes of the combatants, in the penalties that await their rashness or the success that attends their stratagems, that Pope Leo thought the ignorant might derive a knowledge of the game from Vida's hexameters alone.

Whether or not Goldsmith had any personal skill at chess I have not been able to discover; but that he was not entirely ignorant of it may be presumed from the facility and elegance of his paraphrase. When Mr. George Jeffreys translated the same poem (one of seven different English versions of it), and asked Pope's opinion of its execution, the poet thought it unbecoming to deliver his opinion "upon a subject to which he is a stranger";¹ but perhaps this was the civil avoidance of a disagreeable request, for what knowledge of the subject, more than Vida himself possessed, should his translator, or the critic of his translator, require? Nevertheless, there may be enough in Pope's remark to favor the presumption of some acquaintance with the game in any one who should undertake such a labor of love connected with it, and this is strengthened by the confidence and freedom of Goldsmith's verse. There is

¹ I quote from the preface to *Father Francis and Sister Constance, a Poem from a Story in the Spectator*. And *Chess, a Poem translated into English from Vida*. By George Jeffreys, Esq. (quarto, 1736). The four opening lines by Mr. Jeffreys run thus:

"A sportive image of the martial rage,
And war which two fictitious monarchs wage,
Their boxen troops inspir'd by thirst of praise,
And party-color'd arms invite my lays."

How inferior to the ease and spirit of Goldsmith!

"Armies of box that sportively engage,
And mimic real battels in their rage,
Pleas'd I recount; how, smit with glory's charms,
Two mighty Monarchs met in adverse arms,
Sable and white."

even something in the note which he appends to the conclusion of his labor that might appear as if written by one familiar with chess. "Archers," he says, referring to Vida's verse, "are what we call Bishops; Horse are what we call Knights; Elephants are what we call Tow'rs, Castles, or Rooks. Apollo has y^e white men, Mercury y^e black."

But before these deities of the strife are introduced the opposing forces in due precedence are marshalled.

"So mov'd the boxen hosts, each double-lin'd,
Their diff'rent colors floating in the wind:
As if an army of the Gauls should go,
With their white standards o'er the Alpine snow
To meet in rigid fight on scorching sands
The sun-burnt Moors and Memnon's swarthy bands."¹

The forces being brought into the field, the order of the fray is next shown, and the stated laws by which their several weapons of assault or defence are subject to be controlled. Here is seen the elegant and easy art, not of the poet simply, but of the master of the laws of the game.

"To lead the fight, the Kings from all their bands
Choose whom they please to bear their great commands.
Should a black Hero first to battle go,
Instant a white one guards against the blow;
But only one at once can charge or shun the foe. . . .
But the great Indian beasts, whose backs sustain
Vast turrets arm'd, when on the redd'ning plain
They join in all the terror of the fight,
Forward or backward, to the left or right
Run furious, and impatient of confine
Scour through the field, and threat the farthest line.
Yet must they ne'er obliquely aim their blows;
That only manner is allowed to those
Whom Mars has favor'd most, who bend the stubborn bows. . . .

¹ This is one of those passages which Pope has most directly imitated in the game at ombre (*Rape of the Lock*, canto iii. verse 81, etc.); but, as Joseph Warton has not failed to point out (*Essay on Poems and Writings of Pope*, Ed. 1783, i. 241), masterly as Pope's lines are,

"Thus, when dispers'd a routed army runs," etc.,

the exquisite propriety of the original, which arises from the different colors of the men at chess, is lost by being transferred to the mixed and indistinguishable colors of the cards of Belinda and the Baron.

The fiery steed, regardless of the reins,
Comes prancing on; but sullenly disdains
The path direct, and boldly wheeling round,
Leaps o'er a double space at ev'ry bound,
And shifts from white or black to diff'rent color'd ground.
But the fierce Queen whom dangers ne'er dismay,
The strength and terror of the bloody day,
In a straight line spreads her destruction wide,
To left or right, before, behind, aside."

The divine machinery is then set in motion. The gods survey the forces in array, and, with their usual desire to enliven the dulness of Olympus, are anxious to engage along with them; but Jove checks and forbids them to take part on either side, and, summoning Mercury and Apollo, places the dark warriors under command of Hermes and the white under that of Phœbus, restricting the divine interference to these two, and limiting their power by the expressed regulations of the contest.

"Then call'd he Phœbus from among the Pow'rs,
And subtle Hermes, whom in softer hours
Fair Maia bore: Youth wanton'd in their face,
Both in life's bloom, both shone with equal grace.
Hermes as yet had never wing'd his feet;
As yet Apollo in his radiant seat
Had never driv'n his chariot through the air,
Known by his bow alone and golden hair."

And now, as the fray proceeds under these respective leaders, it becomes the pleasant art of the poet to show you how superior in such a conflict are the sly resources of stratagem and deceit over those of a more generous and manly nature. The first advantage falls to Mercury, and Apollo can only relieve his King at great sacrifice and loss.

"Apollo sigh'd, and hast'ning to relieve
The straiten'd Monarch, grieved that he must leave
His martial Elephant expos'd to fate,
And view'd with pitying eyes his dang'rous state.
First in his thoughts, however, was his care
To save his King, whom to the neighb'ring square
On the right hand, he snatch'd with trembling flight;
At this with fury springs the sable Knight,

Drew his keen sword, and rising to the blow,
 Sent the great Indian brute to shades below.
 O fatal loss ! for none except the Queen
 Spreads such a terror through the bloody scene.
 Yet shall you ne'er unpunish'd boast your prize,
 The Delian God with stern resentment cries;
 And wedg'd him round with foot, and pour'd in fresh supplies. . . .
 Fir'd at this great success, with double rage
 Apollo hurries on his troops t' engage,
 For blood and havoc wild; and, while he leads
 His troops thus careless, loses both his steeds;
 For if some adverse warriors were o'erthrown,
 He little thought what dangers threat his own.
 But slyer Hermes with observant eyes
 March'd slowly cautious, and at distance spies
 What moves must next succeed, what dangers next arise."

Flushed with the success of his wily policy, however, Hermes is betrayed into a violation of the laws of the fight, which might have escaped a less subtle eye than that of Phœbus; but the fraud is exposed and laughed at. Nothing can be better than the ease and grace with which in the original the poet thus expresses the various incidents to which an ordinary game of chess might be subject, while at the same time he never lays aside the dignity, the politeness, the poetry of his heroic verse. Nor is the absence of all effort more apparent in Vida's Latin than in Goldsmith's English lines.

"He smil'd, and turning to the Gods he said:
 'Though, Hermes, you are perfect in your trade,
 And you can trick and cheat to great surprise,
 These little slights no more shall blind my eyes;
 Correct, then, if you please the move you thus disguise.'
 The Circle laugh'd aloud; and Maia's son
 (As if it had but by mistake been done)
 Recalled his Archer," etc.

The combat is now resumed with greater desperation on both sides, and its fortunes vary more and more. Its interest becomes at last too intense for the spectators. Mars secretly helps Hermes, Vulcan moves on tiptoe to the aid of Phœbus, every art and resource is called in on both sides, Mercury is made fretful, Apollo more cheerful. Then the

Queens meet in deadly encounter, while countless lives are poured out around them; and the black amazon is slain by the white, who in return falls by a sable archer. But the fair monarch's bereavement is soon consoled by the spirit and the ambition which bring up one of his lost partner's attendants gallantly into her place.

("Then the pleas'd King gives orders to prepare
The Crown, the Sceptre, and the Royal Chair,
And owns her for his Queen.")

At this the vexation of Hermes becomes for a time irrepressible; but, warned by the loss into which again his temper betrays him, he recovers self-possession, effects a diversion by new arts, resumes his masterly stratagems, places a new Queen by his black monarch's side, and again with equal forces threatens and appeals his adversary.

"Fierce comes the sable Queen, with fatal threat
Surrounds the Monarch in his royal seat;
Rusht here and there, nor rested till she slew
The last remainder of the whiten'd crew.
Sole stood the King; the midst of all the plain,
Weak and defenceless, his companions slain.
As when the ruddy morn ascending high
Has chac'd the twinkling stars from all the sky,
Your star, fair Venus, still retains its light,
And loveliest goes the latest out of sight.
No safety's left, no gleams of hope remain,
Yet did he not as vanquisht quit the plain;
But try'd to shut himself between the foe,
Unhurt through swords and spears he hop'd to go,
Until no room was left to shun the fatal blow.
For, if none threaten'd, his immediate fate
And his next move must ruin all his state;
All their past toil and labor is in vain,
Vain all the bloody carnage of the plain,
Neither would triumph then, the laurel neither gain."

But not so fortunate is the fair-haired King, on whom the rival monarch now steadily advances, and, watching his opportunity for bringing up his Queen, smiles as the fatal blow, no longer evitable, is struck by his swarthy partner. The fight is over, and Mercury remains master of the field.

"The Victor could not from his insults keep ;
 But laugh'd and sneer'd to see Apollo weep ;
 Jove call'd him near, and gave him in his hand
 The pow'rful happy and mysterious wand,
 By which the Shades are call'd to purer day,
 When penal fire has purg'd their sins away ;
 By which the guilty are condemn'd to dwell
 In the dark mansions of the deepest hell ;
 By which he gives us sleep, or sleep denies,
 And closes at the last the dying eyes.

Soon after this, the heavenly Victor brought
 The game on earth, and first th' Italians taught.

"For (as they say) fair Scacchi he espy'd
 Feeding her cygnets in the silver tide
 (Scacchi the loveliest Seriad of the place),
 And as she stray'd, took her to his embrace.
 Then, to reward her for her virtue lost,
 Gave her the Men and chequer'd board, embost
 With gold and silver curiously inlay'd ;
 And taught her how the Game was to be play'd.
 Ev'n now 'tis honor'd with her happy name,
 And Rome and all the world admire the Game.
 All which the Seriards told me heretofore,
 When my boy-notes amus'd the Serian shore."

And so, resuming the progress of my narrative, I leave without further remark these lively verses, which I should scarcely have quoted at such length if they were not here for the first time printed,¹ as yet remained generally inaccessible, and, in whatever view to be regarded, are at least a striking and unexpected *new fact* in the life of Oliver Goldsmith.

¹ Since this was written I am happy to find that the poem will be included in one of the volumes of an edition of the *Works of Goldsmith*, which as these sheets are passing through the press is announced by Mr. Murray. This edition, the most complete which has yet been issued, will have the advantage of Mr. Cunningham's care and knowledge in preparing and illustrating the text, which in some important cases will for the first time be printed with anything like reasonable accuracy. 1853.